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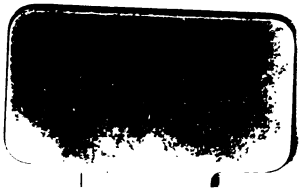

[*See page 3.*

Sur pierre

THE

MILL IN THE VALLEY.

A Tale of German Rural Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"MORAVIAN LIFE IN THE BLACK FOREST."

We need not bid, for cloistered cell,
Our neighbour and our work farewell,
Nor seek to wind ourselves too high
For sinful man beneath the sky.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God.

LONDON:
ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, AND CO.,
25, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1859.

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THE MILL IN THE VALLEY.

CHAPTER I.

A FOREST SCENE.

It was a warm summer afternoon, about the middle of August. Scarcely a breath of air stirred the tops of the tall firs of the forest; the sun cast its beams from a sky of deep and cloudless blue, chequering the landscape with the loveliest combinations of light and shade; whilst the tinkling cowbells far and near filled the air with the sweetest music.

One of these tuneful herds was grazing on a small heath, or rather clearing in the forest, as one might perceive it to be, from the old moss-grown stumps, which rose about a foot above ground. These stumps were interspersed with the sweet-scented

heather, and a kind of stunted grass, on which the cattle contentedly grazed, preferring even this scanty food, with liberty, to the provender they daily received in their pent-up stalls.

A slender young girl, with a complexion embrowned by exposure to the sun, but looking far too delicate for the work she was at, and the peasant's garb she wore, stood leaning against a tree watching the sleek cows as they wandered hither and thither in search of the freshest tufts of grass. She held a stick under her arm, with which to keep them in order, but her fingers were busily employed knitting a stocking, while with a clear, sweet voice, she sang a somewhat mournful lay, the *refrain* of which was,

But Jesus is my only stay.

There was a shade of seriousness in her countenance, which might make her appear older than she really was: from her looks one would have judged her to be about seventeen or eighteen, though the very slight and girlish figure might have passed for that of one far younger.

And it was not the strange but picturesque costume she wore which gave her this slender appearance; for the coloured bodice was very short-waisted, and the glazed black petticoat set out as though a bolster were fastened beneath the folds. The prettiest parts of her dress were the full white sleeves, reaching nearly to the elbow, and the snow-white stockings visible half way up to the knee. On an old stump near at hand lay her black jacket, with a small white straw hat thrown carelessly on the top of it, trimmed round the crown with four black rosettes.

On the other side of the narrow footpath might be seen an old woman, somewhat bent with age, wandering among thick underwood in search of bilberries, for which she was sure to find a ready sale at the next town or village. Her dress was precisely similar to that of the girl, except that the little close-fitting black cap was furnished with a less gaily embroidered head-piece, and she carried a small rushen basket, slung round her neck by a cord, into which she cast the berries as she gathered them.

Attracted by the young girl's song, she desisted awhile from her work to listen to its sweet and plaintive strains; and looking up to see whence they came, was rather surprised at the general appearance of the songstress, so different from that of the round-faced, blue-eyed, rosy-cheeked peasant girls she was accustomed to see. Presently she crossed the path, as though tempted by the greenness of the bushes, and the ripeness of the berries on the opposite side; gradually making her way up to the young maiden, till she was near enough to accost her, she said with a nod, and in the dialect of the country:

"*Guten Tag!*"

"*Guten Tag!*" said the girl, raising her merry grey eyes with a pleasant smile.

"That was a pretty song and a pretty tune you were singing just now," said the old woman, coming still closer, and resting herself on her stick. "I never heard it before. Where did you learn it?"

"It was a hymn," answered the girl, somewhat sadly; "a hymn that I learnt two or three years ago when I was at school; I love to sing it now,

because it reminds me of my schoolfellows; of the happy days I spent with them; of the kind teachers who taught it me; and when I am dull or sad, the words comfort me and make me cheerful again."

"Well," answered the old woman, "and they *are* blessed, comforting words, to be sure; but I did not know they taught that hymn at the village school."

"I did not learn it at the village school," said the girl, "but at the boarding-school at Rosenheim, whither my kind aunt, who is since dead, sent me for three years, that I might receive a good education."

"So, so!" said the old woman, "but what's the use of a good education to one who has to mind the cows and knit stockings? All your knowledge won't help you to milk, and manage those poor brutes."

"Perhaps I should not have had it to do, if my aunt had been still alive," said the girl, with a smothered sigh. "My parents are both dead—at least I believe so," added she, as if speaking to

herself; "and now there is only my uncle, who does not seem to care so much for me since he married again."

"Do you live with this uncle, then? Which is his farm? Can you point it out from here?"

"He owns the Mill in the Valley," replied the girl; "you may see the water sparkling in the sun, as it falls from the wheel in little cascades into the foaming millstream. The house is very near the mill, on that bit of rising ground—there! my aunt, (my step-aunt, you know,) has just come out at the door to call in the youngest boy, who has strayed down to the brook. He is her own child, and a great pet."

"Are there any more children?"

"Yes, two of my own cousins—a boy of six, and a nice little girl of eight, named after my aunt, Frederica, but they always call her Rickele. When I am not minding the cows, I have to take care of the children, which, indeed, I like much better. I am fond of children."

"Well! I'm glad you like *one* of your occupa-

tions, at least," said the old woman; "and I'll tell you what, my lass, I'm sorry for you that you should have to do such rough work, for you don't look quite fit for it; besides, you must have been used to better things, if you have been to school at Rosenheim, for that is where the gentry-folk send their children. I know a little about it, because I have a married son living in the neighbourhood, and his young ones go berrying in the season, and are always sure to find a sale for their wild strawberries, raspberries, bilberries and blackberries at the school. You seem fond of your old friends there; and if you ever wish to send a message, or may be a letter to them, I think I could get it safely conveyed through one of my grandchildren. I don't live there myself, but at the little village of Mönchthal, near at hand, on the other side of the valley."

"Oh, I know the village well," said the girl, quite rejoiced to talk to some one who spoke like a friend to her, and who knew something of Rosenheim; "I pass through it every week when

I carry the butter and eggs to market, and if you will allow me, I will pay you a visit some day."

"Yes, do!" said the old woman, "and my daughter will be so glad to see you! She's about your age, I should think, or not more than two or three years older. Our name is Vöhrenbach.—Well, good-bye, now, my lass! I must gather some more berries, for I want to stew a few of them, with bread, for supper." And nodding her head, she quickly made her way through the heather and brushwood, till the young girl lost sight of her amongst the forest trees.

The early history of young Margaretha, or Greta, as her rustic relatives called her, may be told in few words. Her mother was the daughter of a country clergyman, who had the charge of two of the poor and scattered villages of the Black Forest. A vicar occupying such a position as this cannot be supposed to have been rich. The little household was conducted in the simplest manner possible; his wife (like all German housewives indeed) took an active part in every do-

mestic arrangement; and his children were accustomed from their earliest years to help themselves, and assist their parents, as far as lay in their power. The boys were always ready to do the rough work of the garden, to chop the logs—after old Fritz had sawn them into lengths of three or four feet—into sticks of a foot long, and two or three inches broad, and then to pile them in the wood-house, or stack them near the back-door, whence they might be fetched in by basketsful and placed beneath the stoves, ready for fuel. In winter, they shovelled the snow from the door, or swept a path for their mother from the house to the little dairy across the court. The girls, on the other hand, knitted stockings for the whole family, gathered the fruit and cut the vegetables, or washed the salad for supper.

Still, with all this active employment, though it included even menial work, the children did not lose the gentle character derived from their birth; there was an air of refinement, which distinguished them at all times from the little

peasant children of the neighbourhood. Indeed, they had great advantages over the latter—their parents' example, and their parents' teaching; for both father and mother managed to devote a portion of each day to the mental instruction of their children, intending, when they should be of an age to understand the advantages of education, to send them to school.

When, therefore, Greta's mother was fourteen or fifteen years old, she was sent for a couple of years to a Moravian boarding-school at Rosenheim; and here it was that she learned to put that firm and child-like trust in her Saviour, which enabled her to bear with patience the trials of her after life. For

Jesus was her only stay.

Soon after she left school she married a wealthy young farmer, who for several years made her truly happy.

He was generous and openhearted, and well understood the management of his little farm, but he

too easily allowed himself to be led into temptation by the bad and thoughtless company he met at the annual fairs and cattle-shows; and though these Black-Forest farmers can drink to a very great extent without its being, or being considered, too much for them, still Anton Weiler carried the vice so far that he came to be looked upon, even there, as a confirmed drunkard.

As the gentle, loving wife became by degrees aware of the vice into which her husband had fallen, she endeavoured to remonstrate with him: she spoke to him of religion, of his duty. At first, he silently walked away on such occasions; but by degrees he grew bolder, and scoffed, or spoke harshly to her, till at last he would even attempt to strike her. At such times, the little Margaretha would run up and clasp her arms round his knees, and ask him "if he did not, then, love mamma and his own little Gridli?" This seldom failed to soften him, for he was very fond of the little girl, who was then a sweet child of five years old, with fair complexion, and light

brown hair, which was braided in a coronet round her head, and kept in its place by means of a little silk net fastened across the forehead with a blue ribbon.

The next five years of the unfortunate young woman's life were a season of sore and grievous trial. Her child was her only comfort; she kept her ever at her side. Even at night the little creature shared her mother's bed. Anton was seldom at home now. He spent his life no one knew where, and no one knew how, except that it must be in some bad, riotous way. If he did pay the farm a visit, it was simply to sell a fine horse or a cow to a neighbour, and then depart with the money in his pocket. Sometimes he came late at night, took all the ready money he could find in the house, and left again without even seeing his wife.

It was after one of these nocturnal visits that he was preparing, with a look of despair on his countenance, to leave the house, when, suddenly seized by a kind of frenzy, he rushed wildly into

the kitchen, seized a large and pointed knife, used for cutting up the meat after the slaughter of a sheep or pig, hastened up the stairs, and reached his wife's bed-side. Without allowing himself a moment to think or hesitate, he plunged the blade into the sleeping woman's breast, and, unlocking a cupboard, was preparing to withdraw something from it, when the child opened her eyes, and uttered a piercing scream. He turned—glared wildly upon her, and rushed from the house. A female servant, who slept in the loft, hearing the scream, hastened to her mistress's room, and found her a bleeding corpse.

The child had swooned away, and it was not until several weeks after the terrible event had taken place, that her senses were sufficiently clear to enable her to speak coherently on the subject. She could tell but little, except that she had seen her father at the closet, and her mother bleeding at her side: after that, she knew nothing.

Anton had been seen by no one. He had escaped, whilst all were endeavouring to restore his little

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Anton had been seen by no one. He had escaped, whilst all were endeavouring to restore his little

daughter to consciousness, or to recall life into the inanimate form of his wife.

It was supposed that Weiler had come home in a fit of despair, in search of money, with which to carry on his gambling, and that, not finding sufficient for his purpose, he had in his frenzy determined to make away with his wife, and carry off an old piece of plate, which was an heirloom of the family, and which, he knew, she guarded with jealous care.

After this, Greta was taken home by her kind aunt, the miller's first wife, to live at the Mill in the Valley.

CHAPTER II.

GRETA'S REGRETS.

THE warm rays of the setting sun were now tinging the light clouds, floating above the western horizon, with the richest tints of red and gold, now deepening into purple and orange colour, now fading into pale buff and grey. A slight breeze had sprung up, refreshing alike to animal and vegetable life after the sultry heat of the day; and through the cool clear evening air the Alps were visible in the south, rearing their lofty peaks towards the deep blue sky, from which they stood out in bold relief, like a rose-tinted cameo on an azure ground, or a ridge of mother-of-pearl rocks towering far above the clouds. The faint music of the cow-bells had become louder and more distinct, for on every side large herds of cattle were in motion, wending their way towards their several homesteads,

whilst here and there the voice of a young cowherd might be distinguished whistling a merry tune, or hallooing to a passing companion.

These sounds, and the coolness of the air, seemed to awaken Greta out of the reverie into which she had fallen since her conversation with the old peasant woman. She rose, and calling two or three of her special favourites by name—Snowdrop, Daisy, and Cherry-red—she began to make use of her stick, gently rousing one after another of the ruminating herd, till all were following the leader, Cherry-red, along the narrow track leading through the valley towards the mill. When they reached the mill-stream, the thirsty animals stopped to drink; and whilst Greta was urging the hungry Snowdrop to leave off eating and join her companions in the water, a cheerful voice greeted her ear, and a pretty little blue-eyed girl, in peasant's costume, bounded over the narrow bridge of planks, exclaiming, "Why, Greta, I am so glad you are come back at last! I think you are later than usual to-day; the sun has disappeared behind the hills, and the fowls are gone

to roost. I have been longing for you to come, because I wanted to tell you something. The cows have done drinking now, so I can talk as we go along.—Mother says you need not take the herd out to-morrow—I know you will be glad of that; but that you can go with Karl and me into the forest, and help us to gather berries for her to dry and preserve for the winter. Will it not be delightful? We are to start quite early, as soon as we have had breakfast, and you have milked the cows; and we are to take our dinner with us, and remain out all day."

"I shall like it very much indeed, Rickele," said Greta, taking her little cousin's hand; "it will remind me of the pleasant afternoon excursions I used to make with my schoolfellows at Rosenheim, and of the time when I used to go into the woods with old Martha, and gather the ripest, largest berries to bring home to my dear mother, in a little rushen basket of my own weaving."

"Who was old Martha?" asked Rickele.

"An old servant of my grandfather's," replied

Greta, "who came to live with my mother after her marriage, and who was always very fond of me."

"Did you live in a house like ours?" asked Rickele, after a pause, as they approached a building very much resembling a Swiss cottage, of a rougher make. It appeared to be built chiefly of wood; the roof was thatched and overhanging, and a gallery extended round three sides of the house. There were plenty of windows, with green outside shutters to them.

"I think our house was larger and better built than this," answered Greta, with a half-sigh; and so saying she drove the cows into their stalls, which were under the same roof with the dwelling-house, and only separated from the kitchen and sitting-room by a thin partition and a narrow passage.

Having shut the animals in for the night, Greta mounted the steps leading to the gallery outside the house, and proceeded to a little chamber in the roof, which had formerly been a lumber closet, but was now converted into a sleeping-room for herself and Rickele.

Meanwhile the little girl ran into the family sitting-room, or guest-room, as it was called, from the custom of receiving there tired and wayworn travellers, who might desire a glass of beer or a cup of milk to refresh themselves, after having travelled for miles through the thinly populated district without coming to an inn of any sort. It was a large, light, airy apartment, with a sanded floor, and a very low ceiling, from which hung a wicker-cage with a canary bird, a notable songster, and a great pet with the children, who had christened it *Gold-gelb*, or "Yellow as Gold."

On one side, not far from the door, was a large, square stove, covered with brown tiles, with a settle on either side, fixed to the wall; and opposite to it, just under the latticed windows, stood a long table and a couple of benches; some old-fashioned wooden chairs were placed at intervals against the white-washed walls; and two clocks, suspended very near together, one going half an hour in advance of the other, completed the furniture of the apartment.

"Where is Greta, Rickele?" asked a buxom,

good-looking woman, about forty years of age, who was busying herself at the supper table. She was dressed like her niece and step-daughter, in the costume of the country, but in far more costly style than they. The petticoat was of black cloth, and the crown of the cap was embroidered with gold thread, and silks of the gayest colours, whilst the two plaits of fair hair which hung down her back, were interwoven with broad, black ribbon, that descended in long streamers nearly to her feet.

"Where is Greta, child?" repeated she quickly.

"Up in the garret, mother, washing her hands, and changing her skirt, that she may be fit to sit down to supper with us."

At this moment, Margaretha entered, looking very neat and pretty in her clean dress, over which she had fastened a large blue-checked apron, the two lower corners of which were tied together behind to keep it well round her.

"Good evening, aunt," said she, as she entered.

"Good evening," rejoined her aunt, shortly; then turning her head half round, she added:

"Bestir yourself, Greta, and go into the cellar, and fetch up the milk soup, which I placed there this morning to cool.—And do you put the black bread on the table, Rickele, whilst I go to the store-loft for some smoked sausage. Every one seems behindhand this evening."

The little girl did as she was desired, and then ran into the garden behind the house to seek her father, whom she found sitting in a small arbour overgrown with roses and honeysuckle, enjoying his pipe and a can of beer, which stood on a rustic table before him. Michael Speck was a tall, patriarchal-looking old man, somewhere between sixty and seventy years of age, and might almost have been taken for the grandfather, instead of the father of the two chubby, whitehaired little boys, who were clambering about his knees, making vain attempts to snatch off the little black cloth skull-cap that covered his grey locks.

"Supper is ready, father," said Rickele, "and you are to come in, Karl and Oswald," added she, taking the children by the hand; upon which their

father rose, and putting them both on the ground, led the way towards the house.

Every one was too hungry to talk much over supper, and too anxious to satisfy their keen appetites to linger long over it, so that the meal was soon dispatched, and Frau Speck proceeded to undress the little boys, who were then allowed to play about on the stones in front of the door, in their little short, dark shirts, till Greta had finished washing and putting away the supper things, after which she took them up to bed, and having tucked them up, and kissed them, she accompanied Rickele to their own little room, glad to feel that her day's work was at last done.

Greta lay awake long after her little cousin was soundly sleeping. Her chance interview with Dame Vöhrenbach, and the mention of a community so dear to her as that at Rosenheim, awoke memories and regrets that she vainly tried to smother. The school-feasts in the forest, the trumpet-soundings announcing church festivals, the continual gushes of choral music, the daily orderly routine, the quiet

round of lessons, the interesting lectures, all rose forcibly to mind.

"Ah," thought she regretfully, "to what purpose have I acquired skill in many delicate handiworks that none here can appreciate? knowledge in which none here take interest, or, little as it is, can advance me? Were it not better to be without a single aspiration for anything beyond my daily task and daily meal, than to have made a little progress in attainments I feel stealing from me, and to have acquired relish for studies no longer within my reach?—But God knows all. We can but improve opportunities."

And with this thought the tired girl dropped asleep.

CHAPTER III.

LEGEND OF THE MUMMELSEE.

. . . . . "Youth repairs
His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil
Incurring short fatigue."

And so it was with Greta. She rose betimes the next morning, and having performed her simple toilette, and offered up a prayer for that Divine Grace of which she daily found more need to enable her cheerfully to perform the unaccustomed duties imposed upon her, she awoke her little cousin with a kiss, cheerfully telling her that it was a bright morning, and that it promised to be as fine a day as they could wish for their expedition. "So get up at once, dear," added she, "and dress yourself, whilst I go and milk the cows."

"Oh," answered Rickele, jumping up briskly, "I shall be dressed long before you have done

that; and I will come and help you to strain off the milk, and carry it to the dairy."

And the little girl kept her word; and though her help did not amount to much, still it was pleasant and soothing to poor Margaretha to feel that there was some one about her who loved her, and was willing to lessen her amount of labour.

The breakfast consisted of huge slices of black bread, and a large bowl of skimmed milk, which Greta portioned off into lesser bowls for herself and the children, coffee being a luxury which the Frau allowed to none but herself and her husband, except on very rare occasions.

As soon as the frugal meal was finished, the little party, consisting of Margaretha, Karl, and Rickele, set off on their berrying expedition, the latter, at her own request, carrying the basket of provisions, which she skilfully poised on her head. Karl ran on before, chasing the geese, which were on their way down to the mill-stream; and, in boyish glee, tossing his cap into the air. Margaretha brought up the rear, walking at a steadier

pace than the children, and plying her knitting-needles.

Having crossed the little stream, the waters of which sparkled brightly in the morning sun, they proceeded along its banks, till the narrow valley opened out into a tolerably broad and cultivated plain, rendered fertile by means of numerous little dykes or trenches into which the water of the mountain-stream had been led for the purpose of irrigation. In these meadows, which, on account of their great fertility, were known in the neighbourhood by the name of the "Little Paradise," grew a profusion of the loveliest wild flowers. The children would willingly have lingered to pluck some of the deep red pinks, and dark blue gentian, but Margaretha advised them to hasten on, that they might gather a good supply of berries before the heat of the day set in; and the young ones yielded, as they always did, to her gentle persuasions. They now began to enter the dark recesses of the forest, climbing up by a steep ascent to a high table-land, on the other side of which, in a sunny glen, they knew

they should find bilberries in abundance. Here, then, little Rickele paused, and lifting the basket from her head, waited till Greta should come up, and devise some plan for its safe conveyance along the rugged, narrow pathway.

"What shall I do with the basket now, Greta?" cried she, in a doleful voice. "I cannot carry it on my head up *here*, I am sure, or all the milk-soup will be spilt; and if I scramble up with one hand, and drag the basket after me with the other, I am afraid the nice little round flat cheese mother put in for us will be jolted out, and go rolling down the hill like a hoop!"

"Yes," said Margaretha, laughing, "we must think of some better expedient than that, or we shall be in danger of losing our dinner altogether. I will carry the can of soup myself, and tie this cloth firmly over the top of the basket, so that nothing can fall out, and then you can take one handle, and Karl the other, and I think by this means both we and the provisions will reach the top safely."

"Oh yes," said the little girl, quite relieved from her embarrassment, and the fear of losing her dinner, "that will do famously. Come, Karl!" And in the midst of much laughing and screaming, occasioned by the alternate slipperiness and roughness of the path, which continually caused one or another of the little party to stumble or slide in the contrary direction to which he or she wished, the summit was attained.

"That was hard work!" said Karl, as he threw himself, laughing and out of breath, on the mossy ground.

"Yes," said Margaretha, "we will rest here; and in the meantime I will read you something." And, taking her little Bible from her pocket, she read the 104th Psalm. "And now, dears," said she, "let us sing a hymn together. Do you remember that one I taught you, beginning—

"Lord Jesus, thou thy mercies
Each morning dost renew?"

"Oh yes," answered both the children; and in

another minute their little voices were raised in unison with hers in praise of their Maker.

"How cheerily the larks and forest-birds are singing!" remarked Rickele, after a short pause, when the hymn was concluded.

"Yes," said Greta, "just as though they were all joining in a morning song of praise to God. 'These all wait upon thee, O Lord, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season!' And do you hear the bark of the squirrel?" continued she, "as he frisks from branch to branch, and the call of the woodpeckers flying over our heads? See! there is one to the right. How bright his plumage looks, as he flits in and out among the dark fir-trees! And now," said she, rising, "we can go a little way along this bit of level ground, and then we will go down the hill by the path leading to that warm, sunny glen, where the berries are always the largest and sweetest."

The descent, which was a gradual one, was easily accomplished, so that neither the milk soup was spilt, nor the cheese trundled down the hill; and

having stowed away the provisions in a shady spot till noon, the little party set to work in good earnest to fill the baskets which hung at their waists (and which were shaped something like an old-fashioned apron-pocket, being flat at one side, and bulging out on the other,) with the purple juicy fruit, which was, in fact, no very difficult task; for the ground was perfectly carpeted with low, straggling bilberry-bushes, loaded with a profusion of berries, so that the only danger seemed, that, like the donkey that starved because he could not decide between two bundles of hay, the children would lose all their time in running from bush to bush, gathering a berry here and a berry there, and making vain attempts to choose the best, where all were equally fine.

By degrees, however, Greta persuaded them to follow her example, and, seating themselves on the soft, dry moss, despoil one bush of all its best fruit before they attacked another. We should never waste God's good gifts, even though they are more abundant than *we* want.

"Here, Greta," said Rickele, approaching her cousin, after a long silence, and offering her a leaf on which lay about a dozen very choice berries, "I have saved these for you; and I am going to feed you with them myself," added she, as she placed them one by one in her cousin's mouth with the tips of her little fingers, which were stained red and blue with bilberry-juice.

"Thank you, dear," said Margaretha, as she swallowed the last; "they were almost as large as cherries. But where is Karl? Do you know what he is doing?"

"He is sitting near that old stump yonder, quite hidden behind his bilberry-bush," said Rickele, "and his basket is nearly full already."

"Probably more attention has been paid to quantity than quality in that quarter," thought Margaretha, smiling, as she good-humouredly called to the little fellow. "How are you getting on, Karl? are you tired yet?"

"Oh no!" said he, popping up his head above the bush, just as he was in the act of cramming

a whole handful of berries into his mouth, and coming towards her with a face that looked as though it had been rouged from ear to ear—a clear proof that the fruit had as frequently found its way into his mouth as into his basket.

"That's right!" said Greta, examining his store, which was really a better one than she had expected, "you have been a good, industrious boy, and have earned your dinner well; and you shall have some directly. Only we must try and find some cooler spot than this for our dining-room, or we shall be broiled in the sun like so many dried herrings."

"I'm sure I am as thirsty as if I had eaten one," said Rickele; "I wish, Greta, you would go to the spring, and let us dine there."

"Very well, I am quite willing," said Greta; and taking up the provision basket, they penetrated into the depths of the forest, following the course of a little winding stream, till they came to a small, clear pool of water, bubbling up in the midst of long grass and rushes, which was called the spring, or

more frequently the "Source," because it was there that the little mill-stream took its rise.

Here they seated themselves, with their backs to the trunk of an old fir; and, making use of the smooth, flat stump of a recently felled tree as a table, Rickele spread the bread and cheese upon it, whilst Margaretha proceeded to ladle out into deep pewter plates the contents of the can,—namely, milk, and the slices of white roll which had been boiled in it.

"That was very refreshing!" said Rickele, as she threw down her spoon, and cut a slice out of the cheese; "milk soup is a great deal better cold than hot."

"Yes, in summer, but you would not think so in winter," said Margaretha. "And now, whilst you finish your bread and cheese, I will gather some shave-grass and rushes, and show you how to make a basket, as I promised."

"Yes, do; and tell us a story meanwhile!" cried both children at once. "Tell us a fairy tale, Greta!"

"Well, let me see," said Greta, thinking what would be most likely to amuse her little audience. "Do you know the legend of the Mummelsee, which is said to brew up storms whenever stones are thrown into it? It is a little lake or tarn in the Black Forest, some miles from hence. It lies on the top of a high mountain, and is said to be unfathomable. Once upon a time, as a young girl was feeding a herd of milk-white goats upon its banks, she perceived several beautiful spotted cows rise upon the surface of the clear crystal water, followed by a diminutive little man, with a very large head, who drove them towards the bank, and approaching her said, 'Maiden, whilst thou art watching thy goats thou canst keep an eye on my cows; thou shalt lose nought by thy trouble. I have business elsewhere.' And with these words he disappeared down one of the wooded ravines of the mountain. The young girl tended the cows carefully till the evening, when the little man returned, and thanked her for the faithful manner in which she had discharged her office. 'These are bad times,' added he, 'strange war-

riors will soon break in upon these peaceful vales. Shouldst thou ever be in danger, maiden, take a few pebbles from this knoll, and throw an uneven number of them into the lake. Thou shalt then see that I will find means to help thee.'

"Soon after this, war broke out, and hostile bands overran the Black Forest, plundering and burning down farms and villages, and committing all sorts of cruelties on the inhabitants. One day, when the maiden was as usual tending her goats by the side of the lake, she perceived with affright that some soldiers were descending a rocky precipice close by, and apparently making towards her. In her helplessness and alarm, she thought of the little man's injunction, and hastening to the fairy-mound, she picked up three stones, and cast them into the lake. The waters immediately began to foam and to swell, the wind rose, the heavens grew dark, and the thunder rolled fearfully, whilst a terrible shower of hailstones dashed against the side of the precipice which the soldiers were descending. Amidst shouts and cries of alarm at this sudden and

fearful tempest, they endeavoured to reach the summit once more, and as soon as they had disappeared the black clouds rolled off, the sky was again blue, and the lake peaceful and glassy as before."

"And the little man had caused all that!" exclaimed Karl. "How glad the girl must have been that she had good-naturedly taken care of his cows for him! But go on with the story, Greta."

"That is all," said Greta, "except that it has ever since been believed, that we need only throw into the lake an uneven number of stones from the fairy-mound, to raise the most terrible storm of rain, thunder, and lightning. But we do not believe such nonsense, you know. And now, Rickele, take your little basket, and you can run about with Karl, and gather wild flowers, whilst I cut some of this long grass to take home for the cows."

Margaretha found cutting the grass hard work, and her arms soon grew stiff and tired; but she knew her aunt would be displeased if she did not carry home a good bundle, therefore she laboured

patiently on, now and then humming a hymn to herself, or her favourite motto,

Jesus is my only stay,

till presently the sound of the children's merry voices made her look up. They were running, or rather stumbling on at a good pace towards her, over stumps, stones, and brushwood, laughing and calling her by name.

"Here, Greta," said Rickele, as she came up to her, holding out her apron, which was full of green weeds, "these are all good for the cows, so you can add them to your bundle, and then you need not tire your back any more with stooping after the grass. I am sure you have enough there; and Karl has gathered flowers for himself and me too, so now we can finish filling our fruit-baskets, and then go home."

"Yes," said Greta, "as you have so kindly helped me to make up my bundle of fodder, we can return at once; we shall find plenty of berries all the way, and I think we shall reach the farm in good time for supper."

Having washed their hands and slaked their thirst with the cool water of the spring, the little troop set forward in the direction of the valley.

Rickele had again charged herself with the provision basket, Margaretha was half hidden beneath the load of grass upon her head, and little Karl ran on before, catching butterflies with his cap, or now and then gathering a whole branch of bilberries, which he stripped as he went along. A few small twigs particularly full of berries he trimmed nicely with his pocket-knife, and tied in a bunch with a wisp of fine grass, to take home to his little step-brother.

Frau Speck was quite satisfied with the result of their labours; and as she caught sight of the heap of fresh grass, which Greta was carrying into the stable, she called to the weary girl in a kindlier tone than usual to "make haste and milk the cows, and come to supper, for that she must be both tired and hungry."

CHAPTER IV.

THE IDIOT-GIRL.

"Poor girl! she looks weary," said Margaretha's uncle, as she quitted the room after supper, with little Oswald in her arms. "She's not fit for rough work."

"Oh," answered the Frau, "she will get used to it in time. When we have driven her fine-lady notions out of her head, you will find that she will no longer mope."

"Well, I hope you may be right," said the miller, who was more tender-hearted than his wife. "It certainly is not natural to her to mope, if one may judge by her laugh, when anything happens to please her. But that only makes one the more notice her being down-hearted."

"Nonsense! down-hearted!—she has no business to be down-hearted at having a little whole-

some, active work to do, which will make her fitter for a farmer's wife, as she is likely to be, soon or late. There's Toni, old Schäfer's son, on the other side of the valley, he's the youngest, therefore, as soon as he marries he will come in for the farm, and the old couple will take up their quarters in the little cottage which they now use as granary and store-house; there could not be a better match for Greta,—and I fancy he often goes a long way round to his work, when he knows she is herding the cows in the forest, just to get a glimpse of her. But who would think of having her, while she is so helpless, and ignorant of all a peasant's wife should know?"

Saying which, the Frau bustled out of the room, leaving her husband to pursue his cogitations on the subject alone, or to follow her to bed, as he pleased.

Old Speck and his wife frequently had a quiet dispute of this nature respecting Margaretha, whose lot the kind miller would fain have rendered more tolerable to her; but the Frau's volubility and

eloquence always carried the day. She had no intention of being unkind to Greta, whom she considered a good-natured, useful girl; but she declared, that she was convinced the only way to wean her from her former habits and ideas, was to give her plenty of rough work to do, such as herding the cows, cutting the fodder, and labouring in the fields.

The next day was market-day, and Margaretha set out early in the morning with her basket on her arm for the little town of Dornfeld, situated about a mile beyond Mönchthal, where the good old peasant-woman lived, with whom she had made acquaintance in the forest.

On arriving at the village, which consisted of one long straggling row of houses, of all shapes and sizes, some built of wood, others partly of wood and partly of stone, Margaretha inquired of some little half-naked children playing on a door-step, where Dame Vöhrenbach and her daughter lived. The little creatures stared at her with wide open mouths till she repeated her question, when one of the big-

gest scrambled up, and, looking her full in the face, said, "Oh, you mean the idiot's mother! she lives down there," pointing to a cottage that looked somewhat tidier than the rest; "you'll know the house by the girl that sits in front, working her body backwards and forwards like the saw in the mill."

Margaretha walked on, wondering whether the girl thus described, and whom she had frequently noticed when passing through the village, could be the daughter of whom the old woman had spoken. Just as she approached the house, however, a stout, healthy looking young woman came to the door, and upon Greta's asking her if this were Dame Vöhrenbach's cottage, she answered, "Yes, and I am her daughter,—and that is my sister," added she, pointing to the little emaciated figure sitting at a short distance from the door, on a milkpail turned upside down; "she is an idiot, poor thing, and constantly moves to and fro, as you now see her, whilst she works her arms about, as if she were endeavouring to get up and could not."

"Poor child!" said Margaretha, as she gazed with compassion on the little object of pity before her. She could scarcely imagine that the girl was an idiot; there was not the usual vacant stare in the dark blue eye, and the pale, oval face had something severe, yet deeply interesting in its expression.

Greta was about to remark upon this, when a sudden change appeared in the girl's countenance. The movement of her arms, which had ceased for an instant, was renewed more violently than before, while a lowering frown darkened the open brow, on which the workings of inward passion were but too plainly visible.

"Is she in pain?" asked Margaretha, turning to the young woman with a look of alarm.

"No," said she, "only angry: she cannot bear to be looked at, especially by strangers, and if you were near enough to her she would seize your clothes, and tear or bite them to pieces. You want to speak to mother, I suppose; she is just inside, and if you will be so good as to step in, I will stay with Mimi, and pacify her." So saying, she took

the excited girl in her arms, and began to walk to and fro with her.

Margaretha, meanwhile, entered the cottage, and was immediately recognised by the old woman, who cheerfully bade her welcome, begging her to sit down and wait to see her daughter, who was but gone out for a moment.

Greta related how she had already made acquaintance with her, and that she had left her with the idiot-girl.

"Ah!" said the old woman, sighing, "Elise is very kind to the dear child, and can manage her better than any one."

"How old is the little girl?" asked Margaretha.

"Thirteen last June; but she is just like an infant, except in her passions, which are strong and violent. She can neither walk nor speak, and we are obliged to do everything for her, even feed her."

"Was she born an idiot?" asked Margaretha.

"I can scarcely say," returned Dame Vöhrenbach, "but for my own part, I believe *not*, though she has certainly been one ever since she was less

than a year old. Elise, who was but a child herself at that time, was in the habit of taking her into the forest to amuse her there whilst I was busy in the house; and as she was a careful little girl, I had not much fear for her charge, though I frequently warned her not to let the babe be an instant out of her sight. One day, however, she set the child down on the turf, whilst she went to gather some berries at a little distance. A herd of cattle was feeding close by, and the bull, perceiving the little creature lying there, rushed at it and tossed it. It fell insensible at Elise's feet, whose screams attracted the cowherd to the spot. He beat the bull off, and advised Elise to hasten home with the child. We soon restored her to consciousness, but I date her idiotcy from that day. Elise was inconsolable when she became aware of the sad consequences of her thoughtlessness, and has ever since been unwearying in her care of her little idiot-sister."

Just as the old woman had finished this relation, the door opened, and a young man, in a clerical habit, entered the room. His figure was tall and

slender, his complexion fair, and long locks of light wavy hair descended to his shoulders, after the fashion of the German students. This, together with the gentle expression of his countenance, would have given him a look almost too feminine had not the compression of the lips, and the fine curve of the mouth, spoken of an unusual degree of firmness and strength of character. He was a young clergyman, who had lately taken orders, and had but a short time since entered upon the office of curate to the old rector of the parish of Mönchthal.

Having uttered the usual greeting on entering, the young man glanced slightly at Margaretha, and then proceeded to ask the old woman how her husband was, and whether he were yet able to work.

"Oh yes, sir," she replied, "he went off again early this morning to his charcoal-burning in the forest, taking Hans with him. And glad and thankful I am that he has got about again."

"It is a very great mercy," replied the young curate, "and you should, indeed, be very thankful

to God for his recovery. Such an accident might have cost him his life."

"My good man met with a terrible hurt some weeks since," said Dame Vöhrenbach, explanatorily to Greta. "He had set our son (who is old enough to have had his wits more about him) to watch the charcoal heap, whilst he got a few hours' sleep, and the careless lad let the fire break out. As soon as he saw what had happened, he called his father, in a fright; and he, poor man, strove hard to stifle the flames, but all in vain—and what is worse still, just as he was in the act of throwing on a fresh spadeful of earth, his foot slipped, and he fell into the burning pile. Hans drew him out, but you may imagine in what condition! He could stir neither hand nor foot, but lay writhing in agony, whilst Hans went in search of some woodcutters, who were at work at a distance, to carry him home. Oh! it was a terrible sight to see my poor old man when he arrived, with his clothes all burnt to rags, and his face and arms covered with scars and soot."

Margaretha was grieved at this painful tale;

and, expressing her hope that the old man might be protected from such accidents in future, she rose to take leave, thinking that the clergyman might wish to confer with the old woman alone. Shaking her old friend by the hand, and shyly curtseying to the stranger, she quitted the cottage, and proceeded towards Dornfeld.

"Who is that young girl?" asked the curate, as Greta closed the door.

"A niece of Farmer Speck's, sir, I understand," replied Dame Vöhrenbach; "but I don't know much about the family myself; the neighbours say he had married again just before we came to live in these parts, and that the girl was niece to the first wife. But the family always kept themselves very much to themselves, and no one knows much about their circumstances. The former Frau was a little high, they say, and this young Greta was brought up at a Moravian school, till she came to live with her present aunt: and *she* doesn't treat her just the most tenderly, I fancy."

"She has lost her parents, then?" asked the

young curate, whose sympathy was excited by the good dame's account, and the looks of the young girl herself.

"Yes, sir, so she tells me—when she was quite a child."

"Poor girl; you do not know, I suppose, whether she has any other relations than these Specks?"

"No, sir, I don't. I never saw her to speak to till the other day, when I found her herding cows in the forest."

"Well!—I must not take up any more of your time now," said the young man presently, as he rose, and moved towards the door. "You will want to be cooking your dinner, and I have a long round of visits to make in the parish before noon; so good bye. Tell your husband that I am glad he is up and at work once more."

"Yes, sir, thank you. But I shall not see him till Saturday evening, and on Sunday you will see him yourself, I hope, at church. He stays all the week out in the forest, sleeping in a little mud hut, thatched with moss and turf. Hans comes home

once a week to get a fresh supply of black bread, and they cook their soup themselves. But I'm keeping you standing, sir; good bye."

Greta's appearance had excited some interest in the young curate's mind; and he thought that he would go some afternoon and smoke his pipe, and drink his pint of wine in the miller's guest-room; with which resolution he let the matter rest for the present.

Greta, on the other hand, had been disappointed at the interruption to her conversation with the old woman, and considered Herr Zilling the cause of it. She had hoped to have a long chat about Rosenheim, and to have formed some plan, with the old woman's assistance, for procuring writing materials and dispatching a letter to her old friends there. As it was, she had been able to do nothing of the sort, and returned home rather disappointed with the results of her visit. Added to this, all had not gone right at the market—her basket had been upset, and three of the eggs broken; and a whole pound of butter had received so much

damage by falling into the dust, that she had not been able to sell it. So that on her return to the farm, she received a sharp reproof from the Frau for her carelessness, together with the assurance, "That if she were not, at her age, capable of carrying a basket of butter and eggs to market safely, she would never be fit for anything—such a stupid, awkward creature would never get a husband worth having, and she would have to make up her mind to being a *Kuh-mädchen* (cow-girl) all her life."

CHAPTER V.

THE ARREST.

Poor Margaretha!—her aunt's last words had rung in her ears all day; and she went to her bedroom with a heavy heart that night. In vain she repeated her favourite hymn; it failed to console her. The day had been warm and sultry, distant thunder had been heard at intervals throughout the evening, and now the storm broke furiously over the valley. The glare of vivid flashes of lightning penetrated the chinks of the little green shutters, whilst the rain pattered hard upon the low projecting roof.

Greta was just preparing to get into bed, when she heard the house-door open, and immediately afterwards the sounds of a man's loud, gruff voice in the guest-room. She was about to lay her hand upon the latch, to hear who could have arrived

at that late hour at the farm, when a sudden thought darted through her mind—she knew not why—that it might be her *father!* Improbable as this would at any other time have appeared to her, in the present excited state of her mind it not only seemed probable, but she really believed it to be the case. However, on listening to what was going on below, she found that the visitor was only some poor fellow, whom the storm had unexpectedly overtaken, and who had come to beg shelter for the night.

The man was a Tyrolese, who had wandered thus far from his own country, hawking candied fruits and spices at the villages and scattered farms he chanced to pass on his way, wisely preferring this to attempting to dispose of them in towns, where such things are at all times easy to be obtained. Frau Speck looked over his wares, and having chosen such as she thought would be useful for culinary purposes, supplied him in return with a good supper of beer and black bread, with a large slice of strongly flavoured cheese, such as well suited

his mountaineer's palate and appetite, and then sent him to a clean bed of straw in an outhouse.

Greta, meanwhile, had gone to bed and fallen into a troubled sleep. She dreamed of her father—that he was living in a distant land, far away from all his friends and kindred. Then the scene changed: she thought that he had returned to his fatherland, risking the danger of arrest, and perhaps execution, that he might once more see his daughter—his only child. Then came the conflict in her own breast: she was summoned to see him, but how could she ever look the murderer of her mother in the face, or treat him with filial affection and respect! Nay—that would be impossible! But then, who will have pity on him if his own child flees him? and perhaps he is even now suffering all the bitter pangs of remorse, and is ready in a paroxysm of grief and anguish to put a violent end to his blood-stained and miserable existence! "Oh!" exclaimed she, "I will go to him—I will teach him where the penitent sinner may find comfort!"

As she uttered these words, poor Greta awoke, to find that the whole had been a repetition of her thoughts during the day.

Some years had passed since any one had spoken to Margaretha of her father, or even mentioned his name in her hearing. Her relations wished her to believe him dead, thinking it better for her own peace of mind, and for *his* safety, that the young and inexperienced girl should not be aware that he was still living, as they had every reason to suppose, in a state of self-imposed banishment, in order to elude the hands of justice, which were ready to inflict upon him the punishment due to his crime, whenever he should come within their grasp. Greta, however, was aware of more than her relations supposed. The circumstances of her mother's death remained vividly impressed on her memory, and although she had never seen her father, nor been told what had become of him since that terrible event, still she had gathered much from the half-whispered hints and mysterious remarks made in former years in

her presence, when her friends had imagined that such a child would not comprehend them; and as she grew older the meaning of many such a saying and expression had become clear to her, and she had long since felt convinced that her father was not really dead, but living somewhere in concealment—she believed in America.

How gladly would she have inquired whether he had been heard of since he left the country, what was his present condition, and whether he were penitent? but she dared not touch upon a subject which appeared to be altogether a forbidden one.

Still, her dream had made a great impression on her mind; and whilst she herded her cows, and knitted her stockings in the forest, her thoughts roamed more than ever from her own country to that distant land, which she imagined was now her father's home. She longed to know something about him. Even sorrowful news, she thought, would be better than none. She did not desire to *see* him, but her heart's wish was to know whether he were penitent, and that he was not suffering. How

often our gratified wishes are our correction or our punishment!

Two or three weeks after the night of the storm, when the peculiarly loud, powerful voice of the Tyrolese pedlar had so strangely reminded Greta of her father, she was startled one afternoon as she came tired and hot from the harvest-field, with her uncle, and Rosina, one of the farm-servants, to hear the same deep tones proceeding from the guest-room. On entering, she perceived a Tyrolese sitting at the long table, with his back towards the door. It was the same who, more than a fortnight ago, had begged a night's lodging at the farm: being again in the neighbourhood, he had thought he would pay his hospitable hosts a second visit. Greta knew him at once, by his voice, although she had not seen him on the former occasion, as he had left the farm before any of the family were up.

Her uncle welcomed him cordially, and then, having politely acknowledged the presence of a more important guest, who sat in a corner against the wall, leisurely smoking his cigar, and sipping

his wine, he called to his wife to let him and the girls have some beer and bread and cheese.

The Tyrolese, and the stranger, who was no other than Herr Zilling, the young curate of Mönchthal, appeared to have been engaged in an interesting conversation, which the entrance of the host had interrupted. Presently, however, the curate turned to the latter, saying,

"*Herr Wirth*, have you already heard what this good man has been telling me, of the arrest of one Anton Weiler, who is said to have killed his wife in a fit of intoxication, some eight years since?"

"No!" said Speck, changing colour; then recovering himself, he asked with feigned surprise who this Anton Weiler was, and how it came that he was but now arrested for a crime committed so many years ago.

"Why," said the Tyrolese, "he is only arrested on *suspicion*, and the case has not yet been thoroughly investigated; but it appears that a man of the name of Anton Weiler did murder his wife about eight years ago, and that he got away over

seas somewhere, to escape the hands of justice; and now, you see, he has returned, imagining, I suppose, that he could do so with safety after so long an absence. But I wonder you don't know the name, and all about the affair, since the man was a native of the Black Forest, like yourself."

"The Black Forest is a large place," said the farmer, evasively, "and what happens in one part is not always known to the inhabitants of another; besides, industrious folks have better things to do than listening to old wives' tales of murders and horrid deaths that happened long years ago."

"True, and he did not belong just to this part of the forest either," remarked the Tyrolese.

"But you say he is only arrested on *suspicion?* Do you mean that they are not sure that the man they have arrested *is* Anton Weiler?"

"Just so; they have not been able to identify him as yet; all his relations appear to have moved away from their native place, and gone no one knows where—poor things! they may well hide their heads after such a thing as that happening to

one of the family; though, to be sure, they could not help it."

"But on what grounds, then, has the arrest taken place?" inquired the curate.

"That I can't say," replied the Tyrolese. "I only know that when he presented his passport at the Baden frontiers, the authorities were not satisfied with it, and after examining it, and examining *him* very carefully, they arrested him in the name of the Grand Duke, charging him with the crime I have mentioned. The fellow protested against it, alleging that he did not belong to these parts, but was an innocent, hard-working man, who having been tolerably fortunate at the Australian gold-diggings, was on his way to rejoin his family in Austria: his name was certainly Weiler—Wilhelm Weiler—but there might be many Weilers in the world, and if his description unfortunately answered to that of Anton Weiler on the magistrates' books, that was nature's fault, not his."

"Poor fellow!" said the curate. "Supposing him to be innocent, as he says, his feelings must

be painful enough at this unexpected interruption to his journey, at a time when he was looking forward to a speedy meeting with his family."

"Painful enough, as you say, sir," rejoined the miller, absently, as he rose to return to the harvest-field. Gulping down the remains of a tall glass of beer, he turned short round on Rosina, with the question—"Where's Greta?"

"She's been gone this long time," said the girl, opening her round blue eyes in astonishment at her master's strange look, and unusually sharp manner.

"Where is she gone, and when did she leave the room?" asked the old man, anxious to ascertain how much of the conversation she had overheard.

"Oh," said the Tyrolese, shouldering his pack and preparing to go, "I can tell you: I noticed the girl turn pale as soon as the Herr named Anton Weiler; she left the room immediately. And I must be off too." Saying which, with a little nod, and a good-humoured "Adieu," the man

left the house, followed by Speck and Rosina, who had been too much absorbed in the discussion of her bread and cheese to attend to the conversation that had taken place, and quietly remarked, that Greta had probably returned to the field, or that she had been called to do something in the house.

Both of these suppositions were, however, wrong. Without waiting to hear more than Herr Zilling's first words, Greta had hastened to her own little room, where she threw herself on her knees, and with uplifted hands and streaming eyes implored that God, to whom she had been accustomed to look in affliction of every nature, to hear her prayer now. She scarcely knew what she said, or what she asked. She prayed that her father might escape; that her only surviving parent might not be made a public example, and suffer a shameful death at men's hands, perhaps even before he had made his peace with his Maker.

While Greta was thus engaged, Herr Zilling sat alone in the guest-room, finishing his third

cigar; just as he took the last whiff, the Frau entered, and he asked what he had to pay for his wine.

While she counted out some small coins in change for a gulden, he asked her if both the young girls who had come in with her husband were related to him.

"Oh, no! the one with the fresh colour comes from your village, sir. Her name is Rosina Schwarz. I dare say you know her parents. The other is our niece, Greta Weiler."

"Is she a good girl?" inquired the curate.

"Oh, yes! good enough in her way. She don't take to house-work and such-like, but she must learn to do so. She was brought up far too tenderly by her mother, poor woman! and, to my mind, with very improper notions."

"She lost her mother at a very early age, did she not?"

"Yes, sir, and in a very sad way. She was murdered before the child's own eyes, and all for the sake of a bit of plate, 'tis said."

"Terrible! And her father is dead too?"

"She lost both parents at once, sir," said the woman evasively.

"Was he murdered too?" asked the curate, opening his eyes.

"No, sir, no; I don't know what he died of—perhaps of grief," said the woman hurriedly, and wishing to put a stop to the conversation before any more dangerous questions should be asked.

"Poor orphan! And so you charitably fill a mother's place to her, and smoothe the rough paths the lonely girl would otherwise have to tread?" said the curate, as he opened the door to go, hoping that by thus *attributing* to her what was right, she might be led to *do* it.

CHAPTER VI.

A WITNESS FOUND.

HERR ZILLING pursued his way in deep thought; and, instead of following the beaten road, he crossed the valley to take a short cut through the forest, and thereby came unexpectedly upon Greta, tending her cows. The poor girl had brought the herd out in preference to returning to the harvest-field, where her red and swollen eyes would have excited attention. She was not knitting, but resting her head upon her hand; and though her face was averted, there was such dejection in her attitude, that the kind young curate was touched with pity, and instead of passing her with a common greeting, he said—

"Are you fond of reading?"

"Very," said Greta, starting.

"You have not many books, I dare say?"

"Oh no, sir!"

"Here, then, is a little volume I will lend you till I see you again; and if you reap pleasure and profit from it, I will then exchange it for another. And, mark you, this book was written by a girl as young as yourself—a young girl in humble life, with no advantages but those of worthy parents and a common school-training; but she read and reflected on her Bible, and at length was able to inculcate those pure precepts which already were the rule of her life. The result was this little volume, which, you will find, has been read by the Queen of England and Prince Albert with pleasure, besides obtaining immense currency in her own and other countries."

Greta's face beamed with smiles as she received the book, which was "The Pearl of Days," translated into German.

"I will be very careful of it," said she, with timid pleasure.

"I am sure you will, or I should not lend it you," replied Herr Zilling, smiling. "When people

are careful of my books, nothing affords me more satisfaction than to lend them; the more they circulate, the more valuable I esteem them. A love of reading is one of the truest, cheapest, and most innocent relaxations a man can have, or a woman either. It is capable, indeed, of abuse, as by tempting us to devote to it the time we owe to our duties and necessary employments; but those who really love reading, or music, or mechanics, or, in fact, anything, are ingenious in finding odd moments for their favourite resource—moments that are lawfully their own—without letting them trespass on their engagements; and—I never, certainly, looked after cows myself, but I should think you might watch them with one eye, while you read with the other."

And with a cheerful smile he passed on; but turned back again, and said, "Your name"—and his tone became graver—"your name, I understand, is Weiler. This may bring you into trouble in connection with this man, whether you really know anything of him or not; therefore I will take the

precaution of advising you to be much on your guard concerning him, and neither to be tempted by humanity to tell any falsehoods, (which would be *wrong*,) nor let anything escape you that may just as well remain unsaid. Good bye."

"Oh, sir!" began Greta hurriedly.

"What?" said he, after he had paused and waited a little.

She looked bewildered and much distressed. "I hardly know what to do," said she, pressing her hands strongly together. "I have a great mind to tell you all—all I know, and all I fear."

"No, no, that will not do at all," replied he quickly. "You had best keep your thoughts completely to yourself; it was precisely against this impulse to disburthen your mind that I wished to guard you. You know nothing of me, and your next communication may be with those of whom you know as little, and who are not so safe. Even your aunt and uncle, of whom you know more, may not direct you as well as your own plain sense, under the direction of God. Make Him, therefore,

your only confidant; tell Him all your difficulties, your sorrows, your fears; and then act simply and prudently, according to circumstances, taking care always not to lose your presence of mind."

Saying which, he went on his way. Poor Greta sat down and looked after him, and then at the book in her hand. She felt fluttered, pleased, and yet pained. Her perplexed thoughts about her father had at first been agreeably dispersed by Herr Zilling's kind offer of the book; but the pleasant impressions with which he was about to leave her were dispelled by his returning and recurring to the subject of her anxiety, without permitting her to consult him on it. Still he seemed to guess something like the truth, without the need of hearing it; and she felt confident that whatever might be his suspicions, she might trust to his humanity and honour. Besides, had he not given her the very best advice her case admitted of—to cast her burthen upon God, and be very circumspect in her conduct?

It was good and wise counsel, and she would

follow it; there was no need to wait till bed-time, when she should be shut up in her own little room; she could clasp her hands upon her knees then and there, and in simple, fervent words address herself for help to the Most High. And so she did; and a weight seemed lifted from her bosom. She softly sang—

"For Jesus is my only stay,"

and then opened and began to read "The Pearl of Days."

She was surprised to find the work of a labouring man's daughter dedicated *by permission* to the Queen, and thought the English could not be quite so proud as they were generally represented. She was also struck with the fact that nine hundred and fifty poor labouring men had both the will and the power to write essays in favour of the due observance of the Sabbath—a proof, she thought, that they must deeply have experienced its benefit. She could not help reflecting on the difference between the German and English mode of keeping the Sabbath, and might have mused long on what

she felt, by comparison, to be a want of religious strictness in her own country, had not her thoughts been diverted to another channel, as her eye caught the concluding sentence of the Introduction.

"That father is gone from among his children; but his voice yet falls upon my ear, his form yet rises before my eye, as, upon the first day of the week, he used to read to us the sacred page, and lead our devotions."

"Oh," thought Greta, as the tears rose to her eyes, "could I exchange *my* last memory of my father for such as this, I should hardly lament his death!"

Whilst Greta was thus engaged, Herr Zilling had regained the high road, where he presently came up with a dusty pedestrian, young, light, and active, with a knapsack at his back, and a pipe in his mouth. There was a comic expression in his good-humoured countenance, enhanced, perhaps, by the sun having caught his nose, and made it rather red. As he turned his head to utter a traveller's greeting, Herr Zilling, to his surprise, recognised Hermann von Bülaw, an old fellow-student, who, on

account of his wandering propensities, had been known throughout the university at Heidelberg as "the Diverting Vagabond." The meeting was a joyous one, and having embraced in true German fashion, kissing each other first on the right cheek, then on the left, and then again on the right, they walked on together, expressing their mutual surprise at thus unexpectedly meeting, after a three years' separation.

"Well, you diverting vagabond, and where did you come from last?" asked Herr Zilling, with a laugh.

"Where but from the Brazils, to be sure!" answered Hermann, in a comic, careless tone, as though Brazil were within a day's walk from his native town. "Rio is a most capital place—streets swarming with coaches, omnibuses, and negroes carrying heavy weights on their heads. Priests lazy, women ugly, food bad, necessaries of life exceeding dear. But yet the people are good-natured and hospitable, the emperor amiable and enlightened. No matter! I soon got tired of that; so I

went up the country with a diamond merchant—he was an educated man, who abused the manners and customs of the natives pretty freely, and travelled like a chief, with a train of mules and obsequious slaves. He told me he had lately cleared 20,000 dollars by a speculation in diamonds—the Brazilians are fond of glittering like their beetles. We parted near Novo Fribourgo, which it was my object to visit, as being originally colonized by Germans. Its coffee plantations are amongst the best in the country, and many of them are in the hands of Swiss and Frenchmen. There is a small Lutheran chapel for the Germans, but the old pastor, who went over with the original settlers, is rather past work, and I did not find much vital religion among his flock."

"Hum! and the place itself?"

"Oh, the place itself is well enough—good schools, good market, fine cool site on a mountain ridge, surrounded by truly alpine scenery, interspersed with many charming villas of German, French, and Swiss planters—you'd like the place!"

"Well! I think I should, and should like to have seen as much of that rich and fertile country, and its luxurious inhabitants, as you have seen. Meanwhile you must tell me all you can about them; not now, though"—added he, stopping short as they came to a narrow pathway leading across a field to a large old, deep-roofed cottage, the walls of which presented the usual chequered appearance of the houses of the Black Forest, being built of a framework of wood, formed of beams fitted together at various angles, and filled up with brick and stuccoed. "I must visit a sick parishioner here; but shall we not see each other again? Come and sup with me this evening; I will get my old landlady to give us a dish of sour-krout! Good bye."

"Done! I accept the invitation," cried Hermann, laughing, as he unbuckled his knapsack, and threw himself down on the grass, where he lay for some minutes stretched at full length, with his eyes half shut, and his cap drawn over his face. Presently he started up, and bawled loudly after his friend—

"How long are you going to be, Zilling? I'll wait here till you come back."

"No, no," cried the other, "don't wait for me; I am going from hence by the shortest cut to Dornfeld on business."

"All right!" returned Hermann, using the palms of his hands as a speaking-trumpet; and, having vented some of his superfluous spirits in a very undignified somerset, he once more stretched himself on the soft turf, and began to sing a song about his *Deutsches Vaterland*. Presently he heard the sound of wheels, and looking up, he saw a cart approaching, in which sat two men, who appeared to be constables, with a young girl between them.

"Anything going forward?" cried Hermann, jumping up.

"A murder case," answered one of the men, gruffly, and drove on, leaving Hermann transfixed to the spot with astonishment.

"What!" thought he to himself, whilst the merry care-for-nought expression passed from his

countenance, "that tender, innocent looking young girl has been committing murder! how very dreadful! Some love-affair it must be, where jealousy and rivalry have been playing their fiendish parts. How sad and dejected she looked, though! It will be an interesting trial, I am sure; I'll go and hear it too; why not?" And slinging his knapsack over his shoulder, he stepped out briskly, that he might overtake the cart. And though he could not do that, he succeeded in keeping it in sight, till they came to a small town, (Dornfeld, in fact,) through which the constables drove, until they arrived at a large dilapidated old building, honoured by the inhabitants with the name of the "Town-hall." Here presided the magistrate of the place, whose only dignity was his title, for he was a most seedy personage, both in point of looks and knowledge of law, whether civil or criminal.

Here, then, Greta was made to alight; and just after she had entered with the two officials, Hermann came up, and was about to follow her into the building, when he suddenly caught sight of Herr Zilling,

making his way through the crowd of curious, news-seeking idlers, who had collected about the door.

"*You* here, too!" cried he.

"*I* might say, '*You* here, too!'" returned Herr Zilling, smiling; then added more gravely, "Do you not remember I told you I was coming here on business? I heard this afternoon that a man was to be tried here for murder, and as there seemed to be some peculiar circumstances connected with the case, I thought I should like to hear the examination conducted."

"The criminal is a *girl*, not a man," said Hermann; "you must have been misinformed, for I saw her being brought along myself, in a cart between two constables, and they told me it was a murder case."

"You must be mistaken," returned Herr Zilling, quickly, as it flashed across his mind that the young girl seen by his friend with the constables must have been Greta, whom they were probably bringing to establish to her father's identity.

"Come in and see!" said Hermann.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EXAMINATION.

When Hermann von Bülaw and his friend entered the hall, Greta was already under examination, but, to the young curate's surprise, the prisoner was not there.

Hermann gave his friend a look, as much as to say, "I was right, you see!" then muttered, "What a precious old fellow they have got to look into the case, though!" glancing towards the upper end of the hall at the magistrate, the old mayor of the place—a tall, gaunt man, whose thin grey hairs were brushed so as to spread over as large a surface of his bald head as possible, and whose narrow forehead, lustreless eyes, and dull expression gave little hope, or fear—whichever it might be—of his going into abstruse points of law.

A trim young man at his side, a little behind him, appeared to be acting as clerk on the occasion, and he looked sharp enough for both. He was short and thick-set, with a large head, the apparent dimensions of which were increased by an amazing quantity of shining black hair. His complexion was swarthy, his eye keen, and there was an indefinable something in his appearance and expression that was exceedingly disagreeable.

At a sign given by the magistrate to one of the constables, the official left the hall without exciting observation.

"Surely you must remember what was your father's personal appearance?" said the magistrate, pursuing his interrogations rather querulously.

"I was but a little child when I lost him," returned the trembling girl, without raising her eyes.

"Another evasion," muttered the clerk; "repeat the question," added he in a low voice, slightly inclining towards the magistrate.

"But do you not remember—" began the magistrate again, then stopping short—"*Is that your*

father?" asked he with startling emphasis, as a side-door was thrown open, and a man appeared conducted between two *gens d'armes*.

"A cruel ruse," thought Zilling to himself, "they will surprise her into an involuntary recognition."

A perfect stillness reigned throughout the hall; every eye was bent on Greta, to mark the effect of her first glance at the prisoner.

She involuntarily looked up, and her eyes met his: both were so conscious of the danger of committing themselves, that only a slight movement of the eyelid betrayed them—it escaped the notice of all but the two fellow-students.

"Is *that* your father?" repeated the magistrate, after a minute's silence.

Greta looked irresolutely from side to side, sedulously avoiding a second glance at the prisoner; and at length burst into tears, exclaiming, "If it *were*, could you expect me to *say?*"

The prisoner gave an unconscious sigh of relief, the clerk laid aside his pen with an impatient gesture, and the old magistrate, moved with pity for

the girl, and finding even his clerk's clever stratagem foiled, considered within himself that he had now done all that his duty required;—nay, to do more might be to persecute an innocent man, and involve consequences disagreeably dangerous. Therefore, no longer paying attention to his monitor's hints to continue the cross-examination, he told the weeping girl she was free to leave the hall, and turning to the prisoner, said:—

"Without proof of your identity or evidence of your guilt, I cannot detain you, but let me warn you to be very circumspect in your future conduct, and, if you would not get into difficulties, to leave the neighbourhood altogether. I, and several others here, strongly suspect you of the crime laid to your charge, and should you ever be brought before one of the higher courts of law, you would probably not escape so easily as you have now done."

An hour or more after this scene had taken place at Dornfeld, just as Greta was about to turn off from the high road into a path running along the outskirts of the forest, she was met by two peasant-

girls, with bundles of grass on their heads. They were hurrying along, talking eagerly as they went. On coming up with Greta, they hastily accosted her, telling her in an under tone, and with looks of alarm, to mind how she went through the forest, for that a crazy man, with rough hair and wild looks, had just sprung out from among the firs, and clutched one of them by the shoulder; but that as she was about to scream, he had let her go, muttering, "'Tis not she," and disappeared.

Thanking them for their caution, poor Greta hurried onward, glancing fearfully from side to side, and expecting at every step to be waylaid by this dreaded wild man of the woods. She endeavoured to allay her terrors by mental prayer, and by repeating texts and scraps of hymns; but the evening was now far advanced, the forest already enveloped in gloom and mist, and she feared that night would come on before she reached home, where her absence must have occasioned strange surprise and alarm already. Her courage rose as she perceived that she was rapidly approaching the spot where the

path turned off from the forest, and she quickened her pace.

At that instant, she heard a slight rustle as of steps in the underwood, and a hurried, anxious voice said, "Greta! surely that is you?"

"Father!" she almost inaudibly replied; and at the same moment the tall figure of a man stood close beside her.

"Hush, hush!" said he quickly, "that word must never be spoken! I have forfeited it, and its utterance from *your* lips would endanger—nay, cost me my life. You have saved me; and oh, child! ere I go hence for ever, let me beg you to remember me constantly in your prayers. God bless you now and evermore!"

He was gone!—and she felt that she had trembled in his arms, and not returned his hasty kiss. She went on with a swelling heart—a heart ready to burst with agitation and overwrought feeling, and once more sought relief in prayer.

As Herr Zilling and his friend quitted the townhall, they heard various expressions of satisfaction

or disappointment at the discharge of the prisoner. Some thought only of the girl, and were glad, for her sake, whether the man were her father or not, at the turn the affair had taken. Others declared that "the fellow looked like a villain; that, for all the girl's self-command and guarded replies, they felt sure she had recognised him, and that such a wretch ought not to have been let off."

A clownish, goodnatured-looking youth, however, whom Herr Zilling knew for the young charcoal-burner, Dame Vöhrenbach's son, replied to one of these cavillers by what would in our vernacular be equivalent to "No, no! I know'd t'wern't he."

"Why, Hans," said the curate, when they were clear of the crowd, "how came you here?"

"Why, you see, sir, I came with my father to sell charcoal in the town, and while he was settling his business, I thought I'd just come and see what was going forward, 'specially as I hear'd as how young Greta was mixed up in the scrape. Mother 'll take on about it finely, when I tell her."

"How came you to know it was not Weiler?"

"*I*, mein Herr?"

"Yes; I heard you say you knew it was not he."

"Oh," said Hans, looking rather silly, "I only meant, I know'd in my own mind, felt persuaded-like, t'wern't he. Because, the others were taking part against him, and I didn't see why they should go and persuade themselves into believing that he really was the murderer, when nothing had been proved against him. So I just told them my opinion, that was all."

"Oh, that was all, was it?" said Herr Zilling, rather disappointed that it amounted to no more, and yet enjoying a secret satisfaction in his own sagacity at having, as he believed, detected the truth from the twinkle of Greta's eyelash.

During the remainder of the walk he seemed abstracted, rousing only at intervals, when Hermann's sudden bursts of humour and gaiety banished for a moment the subject of his meditations from his mind.

On reaching home, however, he remembered that

he had to play host; and proceeding at once to the little kitchen, he thrust in his head at the half-open door, and nodded laughingly to a neat, matronly looking woman—at once his landlady and housekeeper, who was standing at a large, square stove, something resembling a steam apparatus, briskly stirring the contents of a deep cauldron.

"Good evening, Mother Batt, I hope you have a good soup there, and plenty of it," said he. "I have brought a friend home to sup with me, and we are both very hungry. What can you let us have? A dish of sour-krout—he is very fond of that—and smoked sausage, eh?"

"Sure, sir, you must have something better than that, if 'tis—"

"No, no, mother, it is no one you know; my friend has only just arrived from the Brazils—quite a fresh importation!"

"*What*, sir? what is he?"

"He has just come from Brazil, in South America, you know; but I must not leave him alone any longer; give us anything you like—only quickly;

and let us have it in the arbour, it will be pleasanter out of doors, this warm evening."

So saying, he left the old lady to wonder within herself what sort of an outlandish place Brazil might be, and what could induce an honest German to leave his own fatherland to visit those heathenish parts.

"Did you observe what a scrutinizing look Mother Batt gave you?" said Herr Zilling to his friend, laughing, as he seated himself at the table upon which his landlady had just placed a metal tureen of savoury herb-soup, a bowl of stewed bilberries, and a dish of cold *sauerbraten*, that is, meat that had been steeped in vinegar and roasted. "She never heard of Brazil before, and regards you as some wonderful curiosity, I believe, for having been there. By-the-bye, whither are you now bound? You are not on the eve of another wandering, I suppose?"

"Well," said Hermann, raising a flagon to his lips, and taking a long deep draught of beer, "my next destination is Zinningen."

"Zinningen! and what in the world carries you thither?"

"Why, there is to be an eight days' fair; and a friend of mine will have a stall."

"For the sale of gingerbread nuts—or cigars?"

"You may smile, *mein Herr*, but his commodities are much more valuable."

"Brazilian diamonds, then—or Brazilian beetles?"

"Neither. No, I won't satisfy your curiosity; you were not so much out when you said diamonds, though pearls would have been nearer the mark."

"You are very oracular."

"We travellers are always meeting with adventures," said Hermann, laughing. "If I, now, were to write all mine in a book, I might get a handsome sum of money for it."

"Why don't you, then?"

"Too common-place. Besides, I never was good at my pen. I see things—remember them—can tell of them; but I can't write them off."

"That's a pity."

"Well, there are a good many books in the world, as it is."

"That's true, too. But could not you tell *me* what to put down, and then divide the profits with me?"

"Ah, you are laughing, I know. Tell me, now, what could you make of this:—

"One day, I was walking along the road, when I came up to the most singular little vehicle I ever saw in my life; a little house upon wheels, capable of being drawn by a strong horse, that was just then enjoying a good feed, while his master, seated on his doorstep, was eating bread and cheese with apparent relish. I saw in a moment he was a man to my liking, especially as he cheerfully cried, 'Will you come and do as I am doing?'"

"To which, of course, you assented."

"Of course. There was a merry light in his eye, and yet he had a thoughtful brow. We soon became sociable, and I made him out to be quite a gentleman, even apart from his hands and linen. Though he spoke excellent German, he proved to be an Englishman, retired from the navy, who had chosen this singular mode of vagabondizing."

"Of course you fraternized with him immediately?"

"Well, I felt there was such an immense difference between us; because he had a settled object in his wanderings, which I had not. It did occur to me, certainly, to offer to join him, and drive the horse; but, firstly, he might be fond of driving, himself; and, secondly, he might want to go one way, when I wanted to go another."

"Just so. And his merchandize was—"

"Celestial messengers."

"*Celestial messengers?*"

"That was his own name for them."

"Angels are sometimes called celestial messengers," said Herr Zilling, ruminating a little.

"Yes, but his van was not full of angels."

"It might be full of Bibles, though? Eh?"

"You've hit it," said Hermann. "He made his first start at Neufchâtel. Finding how eagerly his Bibles were accepted there, he wrote to the English Bible Society for a fresh supply, begging they might be small, and in ornamental covers. Three large

boxes-full were sent him, which he received with pleasure, and thought they would last him a year; but in this he was quite mistaken. 'In the course of a few days,' said he, 'the common people literally *flowed* towards me, so that within a fortnight I sold seven hundred copies in French and German.* And I found the work so pleasant, that, at last, I resolved to take to it in good earnest, and be, not exactly a gentleman-colporteur, but to convey my precious wares from place to place in a way agreeable to myself. I have now spent four summers in this manner, and enjoy it immensely; it is marvellous what interesting, out-of-the-way spots I visit, and what varieties of character I see. I winter at home, and turn out again in the spring. My van contains a good bed, and everything else that I want. I keep a journal, I play the flute, I make my way to the country fairs, I sell my books, and make friends everywhere!' He told me many interesting anecdotes of his progress, and the people he had met, and

* *Vide* "The Book and its Missions."

added, that he was then on his way to Zinningen fair. There I hope to meet him, and see him at work."

"Well," said Herr Zilling, after a pause, "now tell me some more about Brazil."

"With all my heart," said Hermann. "You remember my going up the country with the diamond-merchant? Well, as we issued from a little belt of forest upon the brow of a hill, which overlooked one of the loveliest little dells imaginable, I perceived, half hidden among bananas and orange-trees, the red-tiled roof of a cottage, inhabited, my companion told me, by two Swiss brothers, who, after serving in the English army, had retired on good pensions to pass the remainder of their days in peaceful seclusion. We descended to the abode of these worthy bachelors, the elder of whom had not been in or near a city for eighteen years. We found him feeding a flock of wild parrots with sunflower-seeds; they were circling about his head and screaming with delight. Within the cottage I found the tables and bookshelves covered with the

best current periodicals, in German, English, and French, and many standard works besides. From a window embowered in roses, we looked out on a garden, with beehives, and a landscape of tropical beauty. While our good old host was entertaining us, his younger brother came in, a very gentlemanly man, who, after conversing with us for some time, and offering us refreshments, accompanied us a short distance on our way."

"I should think they enjoyed almost paradisaical felicity!" observed Herr Zilling; "but tell me, my dear Hermann, something more of our colonists—I almost feel as if I could cast my lot among them."

"Oh, if a German colony is your object, you should go to Ybecaba!"

"Ybecaba! where and what is that?"

"The *fazienda* of the Vigueiros. Do you know who the Vigueiros are? Did you ever hear of them?"

"Never, I assure you!"

"Dear me! Why, they are a most remarkable

family: remarkable, whether for talent or goodness—a father and four sons."*

"Tell me all about them, pray!—you are as good as a story-book."

"Well, the old man, Nicholas Vigueiro, went out to Brazil as a lawyer, and during the Brazilians' struggle for independence, made himself master of the people's confidence. He was deputed to the Cortes of Portugal, and, after very noble and spirited conduct, returned to Rio, where he has been a leader among the Liberals ever since. From the era of Brazilian liberty till now, he has always been a deputy or senator; and repeatedly minister of the empire. A title he has always refused; and every distinction, except the grand cross of Santa Cruz."

"Humph!"

"This hale and happy old man of fourscore has four sons as good as himself, and equally beloved. The eldest, Louis, he sent to study law at Göttingen; the second, José, had a military training in Prussia. The third and fourth sons had a commer-

* *Vide* Kidder and Fletcher's "Brazil and the Brazilians."

cial training in London and Hamburg. Their European education has well fitted them to carry out their father's plans of emigration."

"And what are those plans?"

"To supersede slave labour. In the year 1841 he sent to this country for forty families as colonists, but the government did not support him, and the first experiment was unsuccessful. Five years later, he repeated it with better success. His plan is this: he has an agent here who communicates with public authorities and private individuals, and offers inducements to the able-bodied poor who are inclined to emigrate, by defraying the whole or a part of the expenses of their passage from Hamburg to Brazil. On arriving there, Vigueiro undertakes their transportation into the interior, and every family that comes to the settlement is supplied with a house, so many thousand coffee-plants, and the necessaries and conveniences of life, at wholesale prices. The colonist, on his part, undertakes the charge of the coffee-plants, and agrees to share the profits and expenses of the crop with his employer,

and not to throw up his employment without a year's notice, or payment of his passage-money."

"And does it answer?"

"Capitally! during the year 1854 the plantation brought in upwards of a million and a half pounds of coffee, half the profits of which went to the labourers."

"But the place——"

"Is neatness itself. I visited many of the cottages, and found them the abodes of comfort; with laughing, yellow-haired children talking German, as they played at their doors."

"But it must be very hot?"

"Well, it *is* hot; or else, you know, the coffee would not ripen. But there's a nice air, too. In the village I found an intelligent agent, who keeps the colonists' books, and gives an order for every pound of bacon, or yard of cloth. There are now about a thousand Europeans altogether, some Roman Catholics, some Lutherans; but though their spiritual advantages are not great, their morals are excellent. It is a great experiment of free labour as

compared with that of slaves, in which, if Vigueiro succeeds, he will confer an inestimable boon on humanity. He says, 'I find the labour of a man, who has a will of his own, and interests at stake, vastly more profitable than slave labour.'"

The two friends smoked in silence. After some renewed talk, they parted with feelings of sincere cordiality towards each other, but with very little idea when or where they might meet again.

After Herr Zilling had sped his parting guest, he remained thoughtfully gazing on the cows in the green meadow across the road. But he did not see them; he saw, or seemed to see, two rows of neat detached cottages, surrounded by gardens, and backed by coffee plantations, beneath a fiercely blue Brazilian sky.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE JOLLY ENGLISHMAN.

"FATHER! father!" cried little Rickele, running into the house, and looking almost as much excited as she had been two or three evenings before, when she flew to him to say that Greta had been carried away in a cart by two constables, and that the cows were wandering across the valley. "Father! father! such a strange waggon has broken down on the road—just where that bad rut is, you know! It is like a little white cottage, with green shutters and a chimney; and the wheel will come off, the man thinks, and Greta says he wants you to help him."

"And where are the cows?" said the good miller, thinking first of his herd, but at the same time rising and moving towards the door.

"Oh, the cows are coming home safe enough, father;

—do make haste, please!" cried Rickele, trying the effect of a little force by pulling at his sleeve.

"Gently, gently, my little maid—Fair and softly wins the day. If the man had gone fair and softly, his waggon would not be overturned now."

Rickele kept running in advance, and then returning to him, like a little dog, till they reached the steep, winding road, where, sure enough, "the roving Englishman," whom Hermann von Bülaw had encountered, was labouring with powerful but ineffectual efforts to right his unlucky vehicle, while Greta bravely held the head of the struggling horse. At the same moment two of the miller's men, well powdered with flour, came up.

"We'll soon set it straight," cried the miller, who saw at a glance something in the stranger that bespoke his respect and sympathy.

"Now then, boys!"

"Yo ho! ease her! stop her!" cried Mr. Grey, speaking English in the excitement of the moment, when he saw the powerful efforts of the rustics misdirected.—"There's the wheel off!"

They all looked silly enough. At the same moment the horse began to plunge, so that Greta let it go, and by one or two kicks it got entangled in the drag-chain, and fell heavily to the ground before the men could save it.

"There's a precious business!" said the Englishman with a groan; "if my horse is sprained, where am *I*, I wonder?"

"It's a bad business, sir," said the miller, "but you must make the best of it. Here, Niklas! run off for the wheelwright; Caspar and I will be able to raise the horse.—Soho, poor fellow!"—patting the animal, while the countryman he had spoken to ran off as he was desired. "Greta! mind you the cows."

Greta reluctantly returned to her charges, which had strayed right and left along the road, and were cropping the grass by the wayside. The three men, having removed all the harness, Mr. Grey spoke encouragingly to his horse, who, by a single unassisted effort, raised himself, and stood up, trembling all over.

"I don't believe the poor beast is damaged, but

he won't be the worse for rest and a good feed," said the miller. "Come you along with me, sir, while I lead him quietly to my stable, and join us at our humble supper, if you'll condescend."

"With all my heart, and with many thanks, if you think I may safely leave my van," said Mr. Grey, "for I suppose the wheelwright must not be expected just yet."

"Not within a couple of hours, sir, if even then; for he is very likely at the beerhouse, this being Saturday evening, and you may think yourself lucky if you get him before Monday morning. As for your van, there's no one to go nigh that, unless a rook or a crow, so it is as safe as if in your pocket. Besides, I'll set a boy to watch it, if you like. Here, Claus! look you after this waggon."

A boy, armed with a huge piece of bread and cheese, jumped down from the bank, and undertook the charge with a competent air.

"I may as well turn my key on my property," muttered Mr. Grey, "and then all will be safe;" saying which he locked the door of his movable

dwelling, and carrying the harness over one arm, threw the other round the neck of his horse, who walked quietly forward.

All this was witnessed by Greta, who was not driving the cows very fast.

"I conclude," said Speck, taking a parting glance over his shoulder at the van, "that you chiefly make that little vehicle your house, and sleep in it o' nights; but you will hardly be able to do so to-night with any comfort, because it is all lop-sided, and I wish there were an inn within reach, to which I could direct you. As there is not, however, you shall be welcome to our best spare-bed, with clean pillow-case and upper-sheet, though the bed itself is but straw."

"Set yourself quite at ease on that point, my good friend," said Mr. Grey, cheerfully; "I am used to taking whatever comes readiest, and making the best of it; and I am sure I shall find cause for nothing but thanks under your hospitable roof."

"This way, sir," said the miller, leading the way to the stable.

After seeing his horse well provided for, Mr. Grey followed his host in-doors, where Speck again made some attempt at apology for his homely quarters.

"Nay," cried the Englishman, looking around him, "surely this is as good a guest-room as that in which our Lord ate his last supper with his disciples; and the servant is not above his Master! If you will give me a slice of your sweet rye-bread, a piece of cheese, and a can of beer, I shall be more than satisfied."

"Here comes the Frau, who will be able to provide you with something better than that, presently, I hope," said the miller, as his wife entered, and wishing the stranger "good-day," proceeded to place some glasses and a bottle of the light sour wine of the country on the table.

"Yes," replied she, "supper will be ready directly;" and thus saying, left the room, "on hospitable thoughts intent," without waiting for his reply.

The miller, meanwhile, poured out some wine, which he offered to his guest, saying, "It will not

heat you, sir; it is not like the heavy wines they use in your country."

"*My* country!" said Mr. Grey, with feigned surprise, "why, what countryman do you take me for?"

"Well, sir, from your speech I should hardly have detected you, for you speak our language with scarcely any accent; but from your *look* I imagine you are an Englishman."

"And, pray, what is there in my look that tells you so?"

"That I cannot exactly say, but, 'tis strange enough,—we *always* know an Englishman from one of ourselves by his appearance and manners."

"Well, I hope these distinguishing points are nothing obnoxious in your eyes," said Mr. Grey, laughing; "however, your countrymen are not *invariably* as sharp-sighted as yourself, for I have once or twice been taken for a Swiss or German. I know," continued he, after a minute's pause, "you consider the English who visit your country the strangest set of beings imaginable, and you will think that *I* beat all."

The farmer *did* think so, in fact; but a feeling of respect towards his guest prevented his saying it.

Meanwhile, little Oswald leaned against the stranger's knee, and looked up at him with great interest. Presently, Mr. Grey passed his hand over his little white head, and offering him a piece of biscuit, asked him if he could say a hymn.

The little fellow did not reply, but ran round to his mother, who was arranging the table, and hid his face in her skirts.

"No," said the Frau, "he cannot say any, but the other two children know a number, I believe, that Greta has taught them. I don't like to prevent her teaching them texts, and hymns, and such like, but I'm no advocate for over-much learning; they will get as much as they will ever have need for when they go to the village-school, at Mönchthal. 'Tis rather far for such little creatures, but their father wishes them to begin next spring."

At this moment, Greta and Rickele entered,

bringing various dishes for the supper-table. They were followed by two men and a stout girl, who seated themselves near the door, whilst the family and the stranger took their places at the upper end of the table. The meal was spun out much longer than usual on this evening, for the Englishman had so many strange and interesting stories of his own and other countries to tell, that some of the party forgot almost to eat, whilst all lingered willingly, that they might hear more.

In the midst of supper, Niklas returned from the village, saying the wheelwright was gone to a town ten miles off, and would not be home till Monday. There was nothing to do, therefore, but to wait.

"You will wonder, I dare say," said Mr. Grey to his host, as the servants left the room, and the Frau and Greta began to busy themselves with undressing the children, and clearing away the supper-things, "how a man brought up to the navy, and having passed many years in active service, should have quitted a profession he loved, and that suited

his active, ardent temperament, to carry about Bibles for sale! Yet such is the case. The precious wares with which my van is laden, are copies of the Holy Scriptures in French and German. I have now been engaged upwards of four years in the dispersion of the Bible in Germany and Switzerland, and the success with which I have met has turned what I at first looked upon as a duty, into pure recreation and pleasure."

"The English are always fond of travelling, I know," said the old man; "they are proverbial amongst us for their love of it; but your own profession afforded you opportunity enough, one would think, for seeing strange lands,—and you have not mentioned *why* you quitted it," continued he, half questioning.

"I will tell you, my old friend," said Mr. Grey. "From my earliest years I had made up my mind to become a sailor. My father died when I was quite a child: I was the youngest brother, and very dear to my widowed mother, who was naturally averse from my going to sea. My guardians would

have dissuaded me from it; but to no purpose. At twelve years of age, therefore, I became, in accordance with my own will, a midshipman. From this time, for upwards of sixteen years, I lived entirely for this world, without a thought or care for a better. Never was sailor more wild and thoughtless than I! My visits home, when I obtained leave, were indeed a source of pleasure to my dear mother; but my relations shook their heads, and prophesied I should never be good for anything. However, I learned my profession well, for my heart was in it, and I even received naval honours. Things went on thus for sixteen years: about that time I came under the command of a new captain, a pious man, who endeavoured, as far as he could, to promote religious principles amongst his men. He sometimes engaged in religious discussions with the officers, but the good man found few who thought as he did, and many even scoffed and laughed at him among themselves; I was of their number. However, notwithstanding my outward contempt for all that was good and holy, it is certain that the

foundation for a change was at that time laid in my heart.

"Our vessel being one day becalmed within sight of a small and, as we supposed, uninhabited island, the captain sent half-a-dozen men, under my command, in a small boat ashore, in search of fresh water. I gave them a few directions what to do, and then went off to explore the island by myself. Unfortunately I had fixed no time or place for a rendezvous; when, therefore, they had filled their water-barrels, and waited awhile for me on the shore in vain, the fellows pushed off to return to the ship, and tell the captain they had not seen Lieutenant Grey since noon. Meanwhile, after wandering about, feasting on delicious fruits, and gathering rare plants for my hortus-siccus, I had fallen asleep under the shade of a broad-leaved palm, and when I awoke it was already dusk. I hastened towards the shore, hoping still to find the men waiting for me; but no—the boat was gone! The ship, I could see, was still there; but a wind might spring up in the night, and before morning

she would be wafted far, far away, and I should be left to die on a desert island! As night came on my fears increased; for although I had found no traces of habitation on the island, the bones and skulls that I had seen lying about in various parts led me to believe that it was one of those spots to which cannibals resort to celebrate their horrid orgies. Whilst these anxious thoughts passed through my mind, I had unconsciously fallen upon my knees, and raised my hands in an attitude of prayer—the first time I had ever been in that position since I knelt as a little child at my mother's side. How I came upon my knees I know not, nor am I conscious of having uttered any form of prayer; I can only say, that whilst in this attitude I was roused by hearing the plash of oars approaching the shore: the next moment I was in a boat rowing towards the vessel.

"Of course I received a severe reprimand for my carelessness in the discharge of my duty, with a threat of punishment, should such neglect recur. But, from that hour I was a converted man. At the

first opportunity I quitted the service, intending to become a clergyman. Two things, however, stood in the way of this. In the first place, the family living had already been given away; in the second, I had always avoided study, so that my brother told me that nothing less than two years of the severest application could possibly prepare me for College. This did not answer my purpose: what I wanted was, to employ myself at once, and actively, in the service of God; and, declaring that in teaching others I would teach myself, I started for the Continent with a supply of Bibles, intending to distribute them as I went, and, by dint of frequent perusal of their contents, to qualify myself to expound the sacred truths contained in them to such as would hear me. The first summer I walked, but finding it too fatiguing and too slow a mode of proceeding for my liking, I provided myself with the van, that has already excited your surprise. I find it answers my purpose admirably."

"And do you travel all the year round, sir?"

"No; I always go to England in the autumn,

and spend the winter with my mother, who often says with fondness, that, through me, the winter of the year, and the winter of her life, have become to her the happiest portion of her existence."

"I can imagine that, sir," said Speck; "and I should like myself to sit and talk with you the night through; but we working people go to bed early, and I think you yourself must be tired, and wishing to retire to rest."

"Well," said Mr. Grey, "I shall certainly be glad to go to bed. I have sprained my ankle a little, I fancy, in raising the van. But we have not had evening prayers yet," added he, looking attentively at his host.

"No," said the old man, with something like a sigh; "we have not had family prayers this evening, nor yet for this many a day. When my first good wife was alive, we had them regularly every night—servants, children, and all. But Lotte says the servants are too tired for it to do them any good, and she wants to get the children off to bed after supper; and as for herself and me, why, we

can pray at our own bedsides, and to ourselves, as well as aloud and in the room here."

"And by this means the servants probably never pray at all," said Mr. Grey, "nor, I suppose, the children either?"

"Well," said the farmer, "I think Greta sees to that a little."

At that moment the Frau entered with a candlestick in her hand, saying that the stranger's bed was ready, whenever he might like to retire.

Mr. Grey rose at once, and wished his host and hostess good-night, thinking it better not to pursue the subject just then, but hoping in his own mind that the morrow, which was the Sabbath, might afford him an opportunity for conversing with the Frau.

The next morning, when breakfast was ready, the Englishman could not be found; and Greta, being sent in quest of him, with her little cousins, thought him most likely to be looking after his van. He was there, indeed, but not alone: a group of

children were shyly gathered round him, and he was talking to them earnestly.

"What do you do on Sundays?" he was saying.

"Go to church," said one of them, after a pause.

"Yes, but that is very soon over. What else do you do on Sunday?"

A dead pause.

"Come—*what* do you do?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing! Oh, but is that right? Why was the Sabbath given us?—can you tell me?"

Silence.

"God says we should do no manner of work on this holy day, but keep it holy. How should we keep it holy?"

"By going to church."

"Yes, by going to church; but we are not in church all day long, are we?"

"No."

"Then what else should we do to keep God's day holy?"

No answer.

"Should not we read his holy word, and try to learn what he has done for us, and what he wishes us to do for him?"

Silence.

"Can any of you read?"

"Yes, I!"—"And I!"—"And I!"

"Very well; I am very glad to hear it. Have any of you Bibles, or New Testaments?"

"No."

"Well, look at this nice pretty little New Testament, with bright gilt edges, and coloured binding; should you not like to have it for your own?"

"Yes—yes!" was the eager answer, as they crowded closer to see the beautiful book.

"But I dare say you have none of you money to pay for it; and you know I *sell* these books."

The children's eagerness was checked; they had hoped he was going to *give* them a copy.

"Well," continued he, "you need not look so downcast, for I will tell you how you can all, every one of you, earn such a little book. You can all read, I think you said?"

"Yes."

"Then, look here," opening the volume he held in his hand; "this is the First Epistle of St. John; it is not very long; and whoever will learn it by heart by the time I come again—that will probably be in November—shall receive a little New Testament like this."

"Oh, I will learn it!"—"And I!"—"And I!" said one after another of the little group.

"Very well," said Mr. Grey, "I will see that you are provided with books from which to learn. Go home now, and repeat what I have said to your companions; perhaps they also may like to earn a New Testament."

"May I try too?" asked little Rickele, shyly, as the stranger joined them, and they began to move towards the house.

"Certainly, my little maid; have you a book from which to learn?"

"Oh, yes; there is the old Bible, with the strange pictures, in which father has entered all our birth-days, and the date of his marriage with my first

mother and my other mother; and then Greta has a Bible, out of which I have often learned texts and short passages."

"So, then, I dare say you know those words of our Lord, 'Behold, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest?' When I look around me," continued he, turning to Greta, "and contemplate these acres of ripe corn, still but half reaped; those plots of potatoes, ready to be dug up; and the fields of hemp and poppies, waiting to be cut and dried before the warm rays of the summer sun have left us; I can understand something of what our Saviour felt when he saw so much to be done, and so few ready to do it."

"True, sir," answered Greta, quickly entering into Mr. Grey's train of thought; "were the harvest not soon gathered in, the crops would rot and spoil; and you mean, that the souls ready to receive the truth are numerous, but the labourers few; and so they will perish for want of some one to gather them into the garner—the church of Christ."

"Yes," said Mr. Grey, pleased at the answer of

the young girl, which denoted a degree of intelligence he had not looked for in one of her station; "that *is* what I meant. And do you know why our Lord used the metaphor he did, in speaking of this to his disciples? It was very simple to their ears, because it was customary amongst the Jews to call their rabbins or teachers *reapers*, and their work of instruction the *harvest*."

"Oh yes," said Greta, "I remember hearing that at school, but I had forgotten it."

Just then little Oswald was seen running out of the house towards them very fast; presently, down he came, but he scrambled up in a moment, and trotting up to Mr. Grey, began tugging at his coat, exclaiming, "Mother wants you to come to breakfast, she says, or the coffee will be all cold."

"I'm coming, my little man," said Mr. Grey, glancing with infinite amusement at the odd little specimen of humanity at his side. He was a tolerably fine child, of three years old, but his dress made him look a perfect dwarf. His short little legs were encased in a diminutive pair of corduroys and

stockings, the upper part of his body in a long waistcoat and velveteen jacket, and the whole was surmounted by a felt hat with a broad brim. Mr. Grey had never before seen such a baby dressed in this style, though he had now and then observed older boys in that part of the country wearing a similar costume, and had thought that even they looked absurd enough.

On entering the house, he was pleased to find that a certain degree of outward respect, at least, had been paid to the Sabbath; everything was in nice order within the dwelling, and its inmates dressed in Sunday costume. The old man in his long blue coat, and black velvet small-clothes, the Frau with her cloth jacket, left open in front, and displaying a gay-coloured bodice. Rosina, the girl, was standing at the table, tying up a great nosegay of bright flowers, that she had been gathering to wear in her bosom when she went to church.

During breakfast, while Greta was gone to the kitchen to refill the large brown earthen coffee-pot, Mr. Grey took the opportunity of remarking

to the miller on the intelligence of his elder daughter.

The old man explained to him his mistake, telling him that Greta had early lost her parents, and been adopted by his former wife, who, finding her a delicate, thoughtful child, and not liking to set her to rough work she had never been accustomed to, had resolved to let her have the advantage of a good education, and therefore sent her to the school where her dear mother had been brought up before her.

Greta's entrance prevented the stranger from pursuing the subject. But when she and her uncle Karl and Rickele had started for church,—and they had to go early, for it was a good hour's walk to Mönchthal,—Mr. Grey, who stayed behind for the purpose of nursing his ankle, which was considerably swollen, essayed to draw his hostess into conversation, by alluding once more to her young niece.

"Is she still fond of study?" asked he.

"Oh yes! too fond, by far," said the Frau, setting down the plate she was wiping, with an impatient jerk. "There's a book on the shelf, that has scarcely been

out of her hands for this week past. I don't know what it is, I'm sure; she tells me the Herr Curate lent it her, and 'tis something about how to spend the Sabbath. For my part, I don't see much difference between the Sabbath and any other day—one does not do rough work about the house, nor labour in the fields, to be sure, and one makes oneself tidy and goes to church, when one can; and those who live in towns and villages go out in the afternoon to make merry at some farmhouse or inn, in some pretty rural spot. We have a number here on a Sunday afternoon, as you will see to-day, sir."

"Do you?" said Mr. Grey, quietly. These expressions of indifference with regard to the strict observance of the Sabbath did not startle him. The feelings of his hostess he knew to be those, more or less, of the great mass of her country-people. But he considered this fault as resulting from their education, rather than from any actual want of reverence for the Lord's day. Opening the book, which he had immediately recognized as being "The Pearl of Days," he explained to her with what object, and

by whom, it had been written; and finding that it acquired interest in her eyes from the fact of its authoress being a young peasant woman, he at length ventured to recommend her reading it, and offered to give her a sample of its contents.

To this she assented, more out of curiosity than anything else; and Mr. Grey quickly turned to the following passage:—

"It seems strange, that any one who believes man to be possessed of a moral and intellectual nature, capable of improvement, should set light by, or trifle with, such an institution; and passing strange that those who name the name of Christ, who profess to be *His* followers, who emphatically taught that the Sabbath was made for man, should despise such a privilege, fling away its hallowed restraints, and disregard its sacred obligations. It furnishes him with subjects surpassingly glorious, in the contemplation of which he may exert and cultivate his intellectual powers; it inspires him with hopes, which give him fortitude to endure the unavoidable

evils of his condition, and energy to surmount its difficulties."

The Frau seemed impressed by the flow of the language, but very little by the sentiments it expressed; and Mr. Grey, after enlarging to her on the peacefulness of a village Sabbath in his own country, saw her steal off on pretext of some domestic duty, and himself left without a listener. He limped, therefore, to the door, and seating himself on a heap of logs, which lay there ready for chopping, he gazed awhile on the sparkling mill-stream, now undisturbed by the busy wheel, and peacefully flowing onward, now hidden, now revealed by bright gleams in the sunlight, as it wound through the valley, occasionally disturbed by the leap of a trout or perch. After a short fit of musing, ending in his murmuring—

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!"

Mr. Grey drew out his English Book of Common Prayer, and devoutly read the service for the day. The rest of the morning was spent in alternate

meditation and study of the Scriptures, which to him had ever the interest of a new book.

Towards noon, the good miller and his family returned from church. Dinner immediately followed; and the Frau and Greta then commenced brisk preparations for the expected guests. A long table and some light benches were carried out into the orchard, and placed in the shade of the apple and pear-trees, bending beneath the weight of the ripening fruit; the guest-room was strewn with fresh sand; and a large array of beer-jugs and drinking-cups prepared for immediate use. Villagers soon began to drop in, but while the Frau prepared to serve them, they all, to her surprise, disappeared.

"They have strayed away!" cried she. "Whither, I wonder!"

"To the Englishman's van, I think," said Greta. "I can see quite a little knot of them clustered on the bank."

"Take you this can of beer down to them, then," said her aunt. "It will put the others in mind of

what they want, and draw them back. You can carry a couple of mugs in the other hand."

Greta departed on her errand; and, as she approached the spot, perceived that those in front were seated on the sloping ground in rows, while those in the rear stood and looked over their heads. She also heard the measured tones of some one reading, and presently caught the words—

"Jesus wept."

"The death of Lazarus!" thought she with emotion. "They are listening to Mr. Grey reading the gospel of St. John. How beautiful! how touching!"

She drew near, and paused when she reached the hindmost row; then set down her burthen on the grass, and listened with the rest. Mr. Grey was a fervent reader, and carried his auditors along with him. They were profoundly attentive. When he came to "Lazarus, come forth!" stretching out his right hand and arm straight from the shoulder as he spoke, and looking forward, a deep sigh heaved every heart.

He read straight on to the end of the 53rd verse.

"Now is not this shocking?" said he, closing the book: "after such a scene as this, that one would have thought might have softened the most obdurate, 'From that day forth they took counsel together to'—believe in him? atone to him for all the injustice they had done him? No!—'to put him *to death*.' Would it be so now? Ah, I am afraid it would. We are not a bit better; the human heart is just the same. If he were to come among us this very year, we should only crucify him afresh! This is very sad. Would you like to hear some more about him, my good friends? how they made him a supper, and Lazarus sat at table with him?—or have you heard enough?"

"Go on! go on, sir," cried many voices; and throughout the whole afternoon he read at intervals, sometimes to one group, sometimes to another, or entered into familiar conversation with them on the subjects touched on in his reading, never prolonging it to tediousness, or going too deep for their uncultivated minds. When, at dusk, they

respectfully took leave of him, and prepared to return homewards, he told them that though he did not sell even the word of God on the Sabbath-day, he should have Bibles and New Testaments on sale the following morning, for all who liked to apply to him.

The miller, who had frequently been at his elbow during the afternoon, observed as they returned to the house, that these poor people would be at work in the morning, and unable to come to him.

"However," said he, "Greta shall, if you like it, carry a bag-full of Testaments to Mönchthal, and sell them from door to door."

When the evening meal was concluded, before the servants quitted the room, Mr. Grey turned quietly to his host, and asked his permission to read and expound a chapter of the Bible, and offer a short prayer, before the family separated for the night.

The old man looked for a moment undecidedly at his wife, then answered, "Willingly, I shall like it of all things."

The Frau looked annoyed, the men sheepish; Rosina opened her blue eyes very wide, while Greta was ready to weep for joy, as the remembrance of bygone times came vividly to her mind. She reached the old family Bible from the shelf, and laid it on the table by the stranger.

The simple, fervent prayer that followed the reading was as balm to her heart. She went to bed that night, feeling more peaceful and happy than she had done since the day when she had been called upon to witness against her father.

Oh! there is never sorrow of heart,
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our Friend.

CHAPTER IX.

GRETA TURNS COLPORTEUR.

She rose betimes the next morning, and having milked the cows, and hastily swallowed her breakfast, she took up the bag of Testaments and small Bibles that Mr. Grey had packed for her overnight, and set forth on her colporting expedition. The bright tints with which the rising sun had painted the eastern horizon were scarcely faded from the sky, a thick, impenetrable mist still enveloped the forest, but one by one the tapering fir-tops became visible, suspended, as it were, in mid-air, and fleecy clouds of vapour floated gradually downwards, wreathing themselves fantastically round the stems and lower branches of the trees, till they at last settled in the form of a heavy dew on the mossy turf and underwood.

"It will be a fine day," thought Greta gladly, as she watched the descent of the dew—a sure prognostic of fair weather.

Just then the sun rose bright and clear from behind the forest, bathing the dense mass of foliage in a gleam of soft light, and shedding its warm rays over the corn and pasture-land below. Greta thought of her favourite psalm, and began to repeat, "O Lord, my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment, thou stretchest out the heavens like a curtain."

She had not gone far when she met a party of children, of various ages between eight and fourteen, who were going, they said, to the mill-farm, to speak to the strange Englishman about earning Testaments.

"He will be very glad to see you," said Greta, "and by this time he will be up, I dare say, though I left the farm before he or any one was stirring, as I wish to reach the village before the labourers go to their work."

The fresh morning air, the sweet scent of the new-mown hay, the cheerful song of the forest-birds, and, above all, the pleasant novelty of her errand, conspired to render Greta unusually brisk and cheerful; and when she presently caught sight of the short spire of the village church, with its gilt weathercock, and coloured tiles glittering in the sunlight, she thought the walk had never seemed so short, nor the way so pleasant. The first cottage she visited was Dame Vöhrenbach's. Elise was kneeling on an old mat in front of the door, feeding her little idiot-sister with a mess of bread and milk, which the girl ate listlessly, and with little apparent relish, whilst she made the usual incessant and uneasy movement with her thin, fleshless arms.

Greta nodded smilingly to Elise, with whom she had, during her weekly progresses through the village, become well acquainted, and asked how her sister was.

"Much the same as usual," said Elise, "though I cannot help fancying she wastes from day to day."

"Poor child!" said Greta, "she is indeed emaciated! but I will not stay, she is getting angry already: see how she frowns!"

On entering the house, Greta found the little party just risen from the breakfast-table. Dame Vöhrenbach was busy packing a large loaf and some cheese, a great smoked sausage, and two stone bottles of beer into a basket, whilst the old man stood by, admonishing her to be quick, as he and Hans ought to be already on their way to the charcoal-kiln.

"Good morning, Master Vöhrenbach," said Greta, "I hoped I should catch you before you went to the kiln; I wanted to speak to Hans."

"To *Hans*, did you?" said the old man.

"Why, Greta, what *have* you got in that long bag?" interrupted the Dame, looking up.

"Something for Hans, if he will have it," said Greta, "that is, if he will earn it." And she went on to relate how there was a kind Englishman staying at the farm, who had Bibles for sale; adding, that he would give them to those who were

too poor to buy, and that the children and young people might earn them by learning a certain portion of the Holy Scriptures by heart. "Just see what there is here! all but the two last pages," added she, taking out a little book in paper covers, containing the first, second, and third epistles of St. John, "I thought it would be a pleasant occupation for Hans, whilst he watches the charcoal heap in the forest."

Hans looked rather sheepish, and replied that "he should like to have a Testament of his own, but that he did not know how he could learn all that; however, he would *try*."

"That's right," said Greta, putting the little book into his hands; "and now I must go, for I have a long round to make, and Mr. Grey will await my return before he leaves the farm to pursue his journey. He is on his way to Switzerland, but he will pay us another visit in November," added she, looking at Hans, "and then, if you know the epistle, he will exchange the little book I have given you for a beautiful little Testament with gilt

edges and gay binding, such as I have in my bag."

As Greta left Dame Vöhrenbach's door, she fell in with a party of labourers, both men and women, going to the hay and corn-fields, with their pitch-forks and reaping-hooks on their shoulders, and little bundles containing their luncheon in their hands. Several of these she recognised as having been amongst Mr. Grey's audience of the preceding day, and accosting the foremost of the group, she timidly told him her errand.

"Oh," he said, "*he* didn't want to buy a Testament, why should he? he heard the Bible read every Sunday at church, and what more could he want?"

She ventured to observe, he might like to study it at home; but he walked on, followed by most of the others, who seemed equally to have forgotten the impression made on them yesterday by Mr. Grey's reading. The women, however, and one or two men stayed behind, and Greta presently disposed of three Testaments. One stout girl, with rosy com-

plexion, short petticoats, and bare legs, told her that if she would go to the other end of the village, and visit her blind mother, and persuade her to buy a Bible, she should be very glad; "for," said she, "our old one is so torn, and so many leaves are lost, that it is almost impossible to make sense of what I read to her."

Greta promised to do her best towards getting the old woman to purchase a new one, and asked what her name was.

"Widow Götz," said the girl; "any one will tell you where blind Widow Götz lives. Good-bye!" and she ran after the others.

After encountering several more groups of this kind, amongst whom she generally found one or more purchasers, Greta knocked once more at a cottage door. It was locked, but she could hear the sound of little voices within, and presently a child called through the key-hole—

"Who are you, and what do you want? We are locked in, father and mother are gone to the harvest-field."

"When do they come home?" asked Greta.

"Oh, not before sundown," returned the same little voice; "but Bäberle will come from school at noon, and give us our dinner, and carry them theirs to the field."

"Very well," said Greta, "perhaps I may come again; I should like to speak to Bäberle."

In the next house to this Greta found a crippled man, hard at work making the rough cases for the little wooden clocks so much manufactured in that neighbourhood, and which, being imported in considerable numbers into Holland, find their way thence to England, where they are improperly styled *Dutch clocks*.* He hailed Greta with delight when he learnt her errand, and instantly handed her the price of a Bible, saying that had she not come, he should have sent one of the village children to buy one for him of Mr. Grey, for that he very much wished to possess one.

* It must not be supposed that none of the clocks thus called are made in Holland, although by far the greater number are of German manufacture.

Greta spoke a few words expressive of the comfort and blessing attendant on the study of the Holy Scriptures, and left him intent on some verse that had caught his eye on opening the book. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God,"—that was the text that the young curate had chosen for his sermon a few weeks previously, and which had first excited in the sickly man a strong desire to possess a Bible; and it struck him as strange that he should now have opened on those very words. Greta's next care was to inquire where Widow Götz lived. Her cottage, she was told, was the last but one in the village, so that she could not mistake it.

She found the door open; the old woman was sitting on a bench by the side of the stove, plaiting straw. She was bent nearly double with age, but her fingers moved nimbly enough, and there was an intelligent expression in the hard, wrinkled features.

As Greta entered, she heard her exclaim, "Chicks, chicks, be quiet, can't ye? What ails

thee, Glücke? Sure Hannchen has not forgotten to scatter your food this morning?"

This speech was addressed to a beautiful white hen, cooped up behind a grating in the wall of the apartment, and her brood of unfledged young ones, which were hopping about, incessantly piping as they pecked the grain with which the floor was strewn. The old woman was not aware that a cat had found its way into the room, and was warily stealing amongst the brood, to the great alarm of the parent bird, that fluttered, loudly clucking, against the iron bars of its coop.

Greta gave a little cough, as an intimation of her presence. "Good day, mother," said she, "do you know there is a cat in the room, preparing to pounce on your chickens?"

"Dear me!" said the old woman, "that is why the hen was so uneasy. I am blind, or very nearly so, and did not perceive it. Pray have the kindness to hunt it out."

"I never see a hen and her brood," said Greta, as she complied with this request, "without think-

ing of our Lord's lamentation at the hard-heartedness of the Jews, when he so pathetically exclaimed, 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!' I dare say you remember the passage?"

"Yes, I know the words well," said the old woman, "but I quite forget on what occasion they were spoken; and Sanna says the page where that chapter comes is so worn and torn, that she can make nothing of it."

"It was after our Lord had received intimation that Herod was seeking to lay hold of him, to kill him," said Greta. "The verse begins, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee'—but the whole chapter is very interesting; would you like me to read it to you?"

"Yes, that I should," said the old woman; "but have you time to stay so long, and have you a Testament by you? What made you come in to see me just now?"

Greta explained what was the purpose of her visit to Mönchthal that day, adding that she had already sold several Bibles and Testaments, and expected to dispose of all she had with her before she returned home.

The widow listened to her story with surprise and interest, and said she would gladly purchase a new Bible, but that she could not afford more than half the price. Greta replied that that need make no difficulty; for Mr. Grey had commissioned her to sell them at a cheaper rate, or even give them away, to such as could not afford the money.

When she came to that part of the chapter—the thirteenth of Luke—relating to the miracle performed by Jesus upon the woman who had been bowed together eighteen years by a spirit of infirmity, the old widow gave a deep sigh. Greta left off reading.

"I know what you are thinking of, good mother," said she gently. "You wish that you could in like manner be released from your infirmity, but that is a vain wish; do not sigh for what cannot be; pray

rather that the Saviour will cure your immortal soul of the disease and infirmity with which Satan binds and afflicts it, even as he bound and afflicted the body of this poor woman. You know our Lord has promised that if we *ask* his help, we shall obtain it; if we *seek* him, we shall find him; if we *knock* at the door of grace, it shall be opened to us."

"Yes, yes," said the old woman, "I understand you; how well you can talk and explain things, to be sure! Pray finish the chapter, I like to hear you."

Widow Götz was not the only one who had listened with pleasure to Greta's words. Herr Zilling had come to the cottage with the purpose of paying his blind parishioner a visit, and having a little serious conversation with her; but on hearing Greta reading the Bible aloud, he had paused on the threshold, unwilling to disturb her, and had thus, himself unseen, overheard all that had passed. He was struck by her simple, straightforward earnestness, the clear conception, and sound understanding evinced by her remarks on what she had read, and

retired with an elevated impression of her character, which seemed, he thought, to be little in accordance with the present circumstances of her position.

After visiting a few more cottages, where she disposed of the remainder of her books, and once more inquiring after Bäberle, who was now at home, and whom she persuaded to become a candidate for a Testament, Greta prepared to leave the village.

It was a delightful afternoon, and the sense of having done something really good and useful buoyed her up, and made her feel happier, she thought, than she had ever felt before. On arriving at the farm, she found Mr. Grey making preparations for his departure. The wheelwright had just finished mending the wheel, and the chestnut horse was about to be harnessed to the van.

"So, you are here again!" said Mr. Grey, looking up as Greta approached, and wished him good evening,—"and the bag quite empty; why, you must have had a hard day's work of it!"

Greta gave him an account of her various adver-

tures and proceedings, and as she placed in his hands a little purse containing the sum she had received for the books, she remarked she was sorry her work was over, and that she should like to spend another day in the same manner.

"Well," said Mr. Grey, "how shall I reward you for what you have already done? Will you accept half-a-dozen Bibles and Testaments to dispose of when and how you like best?"

Greta's eye glistened as she thought how much good she might be the means of doing even with half-a-dozen copies, and she gratefully accepted the present.

"And now that this little business is comfortably settled," said he, "I must say good-bye to your uncle and aunt, and then I am off."

Five minutes afterwards the whole family stood assembled at the door, to see the pleasant Englishman drive off. A gay streamer fluttered from the top of the van, displaying a puffy little angel, carrying a book and blowing a trumpet, from which proceeded the words in gilt letters, "Celestial

Messengers." "Good-bye, once more," cried he, as he cracked his whip, and drove on.

"Good-bye! good-bye!" cried they all; "we wish you good speed, and good luck!"

CHAPTER X.

THE FAIR.

HERMANN VON BÜLAW did not reach Zinningen till the afternoon of the third day of the fair. The town was crowded to excess, for it was the last that would be held in the neighbourhood before the Christmas mart, and every one was anxious to provide themselves with winter stores and clothing. Long lines of booths extended from end to end of the spacious market-place, displaying every imaginable article of dress. There were warm, soft stockings of dazzling whiteness, prepared from the fur of the rabbit, and dark felt hose of roughest texture, with great thick boots to match. There were clumsy sabots, and leather shoes with wooden soles two-thirds of an inch in thickness; great rolls of a species of glazed stuff, looking like sackcloth, used by the women to make their skirts of; black cloth

and velvet for their Sunday petticoats and jackets, and costly embroidered head-pieces for their caps. There was a variety of ready-made clothing for the men, coats and jackets thickly lined, fur gloves connected together by a ribbon or cord, to be passed over the shoulders when not worn, and prevent the chance of their being laid down or lost; warm caps with earlaps, to protect that delicate member from the frost and the cold piercing winds so prevalent throughout the winter. There were large stalls of wooden toys, manufactured in the neighbourhood; and crockery, both ordinary and extraordinary in shape and make; water-vessels, such as we see in biblical pictures borne on the heads of eastern damsels; drinking-cups without ears, or with an ear on each side affixed horizontally to the brim; brown earthen coffee-pots, with large bulging bodies and narrow necks, looking like wasps without wings. But the gingerbread!—gingerbread is the staple article of all fairs, but of German fairs in particular. There it lay in huge piles and heaps; large and small cakes, some a yard or two square, dark brown,

light brown, white—plain, spiced, iced, thick, thin —it was literally to be bought by the ell there. There were children to be seen, and now and then the squeak of a whistle, or the more sonorous tones of a trumpet were to be heard; but there was no noise or riot amongst the crowd. The plodding, practical peasants moved steadily hither and thither, carefully examining the goods, and selecting such as they required.

Hermann wandered up and down, amusing himself with looking at the booths, and watching the country-people, whose various strange head-dresses, so different from those of his native place, particularly attracted his attention. There were round hats and tall hats, black straws tied up at the sides with ribbons, sulphur-coloured hats, caps of every description, and bright red handkerchiefs tied under the chin, the latter contrasting well with the broad black bow and fringed ends of the fantastic head-dress of the Markgräflerin. He searched in vain amongst this medley for his English friend's wide-awake.

The day was already drawing to a close, and the people were beginning to stream homewards in picturesque groups, when his attention was suddenly attracted by a clear, manly voice, haranguing a gradually increasing crowd of listeners, who were gathered round the steps of a van, from the top of which streamed a skyblue flag, with the well-known angel and trumpet.

The crowd giving way for a moment, Hermann caught a glimpse of the speaker, whom he immediately recognised as his acquaintance, the itinerant lieutenant.

"I am now about to cross the great white Alps," he was saying; "my destination is Turin. Of that favoured city it may now be said that the people who sat in darkness are beginning to see the dawn of a great light—civil and religious liberty. Their king, Charles Albert, has lately given them a constitution, of which the happiest results may be predicted. At no distant time, I hope to see every Sardinian sitting under his own vine, or under his own fig-tree, reading the

Bible in his native language to his wife and little ones. Oh, happy day! oh, happy they who shall have brought it to pass! My only wonder is that hundreds, thousands of active, energetic young men don't start off to sow the good seed right and left. '*Where?*' Why, all over the world! 'What seed?' Why, this blessed Word of God that I hold in my hand, which is able to make men wise unto salvation! 'What for?' Oh senseless question!—why, to save the souls of perishing sinners, who are your own flesh and blood, and among whom you yourselves have been, and perhaps still are, numbered! If you feel no pity for brother sinners, who may not have had half your advantages, I should say this is very likely to be the case. Yes! to save souls is of *itself* enough to make hundreds start forward on such a glorious errand; but a second and vastly inferior motive is the exquisite pleasure of the work itself. I speak of what I know and have felt, for I am engaged in the work from morning to night, and I give you my word, since

I have engaged in it I have been the happiest of men.

"My dear people, I come from one of the grand old homes of England—one of those country seats replete with every comfort; and I declare to you that in this little wooden box that I call my house, I never envy my elder brother his fine old hall, his park, or his stud. My pleasure lies in things that are within my own reach, which wealth is not. I like driving my own horse, I like boiling my own kettle, and smoking my solitary cigar. I like wandering from place to place, seeing beautiful mountains, and rivers, and noble towns; falling in with people as I go along, now and then giving one a lift, and chatting with him on amusing and useful things, till in the end he buys a Bible, and joins me in prayer, that it may do him good. When we have parted, I watch him out of sight, send a prayer after him, and my heart is as light as a feather. I reach a pleasant glade, halt for the night, tether my horse, have my supper, and lie on the grass reading. Perhaps people gather

round me—all the better. Perhaps they don't; I sing a hymn, and go to bed in my van.

"In the winter, how much I shall have to tell my mother! She is a good woman, and loves to hear what I do. I shall tell her about this fair, and the success I have had here, by God's blessing, day after day. To-day I have sold four hundred copies! Think of that! And in case any of you should be sorry hereafter that you did not buy of me, I have left seventy copies with your book-seller Müller. And now, God bless you all! We will sing another hymn, pray a little prayer, and then I must go,—stay, I will read you a few verses of this blessed book first. The 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, (find out your places, you who have copies,) from the 4th to the 9th verse."

After the fervent little service was over, and the crowd slowly dispersed, many pausing to shake hands with the genial Englishman and wish him good speed, Hermann made his way to him, and received a cheerful greeting. In a few minutes

Mr. Grey had lighted his fire, the little camp-kettle was placed over it, and he and his companion were reclining on the grass, smoking cigars. Mr. Grey had a little frying-pan, and proved himself a capital dresser of mutton-chops, without, as he boasted, soiling his fingers. Hermann, meanwhile, industriously cut bread and butter; and while Mr. Grey refreshed himself by a little silence, he discoursed to him of Brazil, and at length said, he wished he would go there on his errand of love.

Mr. Grey, after a moment's silence, replied—

"Why don't *you?*"

"Well," said Hermann, with a little wince, "I really should like it, but the fact is, I've just engaged myself to be married!"

"Oh, indeed!" said Mr. Grey, merrily, "that is certainly an obstacle to colporting—I suppose—"

But Hermann was not inclined to be rallied on so important a matter; therefore, to change the subject, he quickly resumed—

"By the way, did you notice that shrewd-looking fellow in the pea-jacket and yellow necktie, who

was sitting all the afternoon on the stone bench outside the post-house, talking to those who went in and out? He is Vigueiro's agent, and just the man for his business; I have fallen in with him two or three times since my return to Europe. I would wager anything that he will secure at least half-a-dozen of these hearty, honest-looking Black-Foresters for Vigueiro's colony. As I passed half an hour ago, he had drawn quite a little knot of them around him, and was holding forth to them in glowing terms the great advantages of emigration."

"Do you remember what your countrywoman, Fräulein Ida Pfeiffer, says relative to emigration?" asked Mr. Grey.

"No," said Hermann, "I have not read her work."

"Oh, you should do so, it is exceedingly interesting. Describing the German colony of Petropolis, she says, 'Surely these people must have suffered much misery in their native land to have been willing to come to this remote part of the world for no more than an acre or two of land.' Again

she writes, 'Before leaving this subject, let me entreat my own countrypeople to pause before they come to seek their fortune on the distant coast of Brazil. During my stay here, several ships arrived with poor emigrants; the government, as it had not sent for them, gave them no support; money they had not, and could therefore buy no land; no planter would hire them as labourers, for they could not support the climate, and they had to go about the town begging, or put up with any kind of work and the worst conditions. When they have been sent for by the Brazilian government for purposes of colonization, their case has, of course, been somewhat better; but, even then, if they brought no money with them, they have been very miserable; and though skilled artizans get ready employment and good wages, the demand for them is every day becoming less, as the negroes are now continually brought up to trades. Let none who leave their country delude themselves with false hopes, for terrible is the process of being undeceived, when they are alone and in poverty!'"

In answer to this, Hermann stated what he had on a former occasion told his fellow-student, the young curate, of the superior character and advantages of Vigueiro's new colony.

"That certainly sounds somewhat better," said Mr. Grey, as Hermann finished his recital; "and to say the truth, I should myself have no objection to going out there; not, indeed, to try my fortune, but for the sake of doing good to the neglected souls of the poor emigrants. But, in the first place, I see so much still to be done here at home; in the second, filial duty and affection prevent my straying further away from England."

"How do you mean?" asked Hermann; "if you are away at all, what does it signify whether a few hundred miles more or less separate you from your native land?"

"Were I in Brazil, or any other distant part," said Mr. Grey, "I could not, as I now do, return every winter to my widowed mother, who looks upon me as almost her sole joy and comfort."

"Ah! I understand you now," said Hermann,

and a shade passed over his gay countenance; "I too, was once the joy and hope of a widowed parent, but she died whilst I was still a wild student at the University, and since then until *now* (with significant emphasis on the last word) my life has been without definite object or interest. My pursuits have been harmless, 'tis true, but unsatisfactory; and since I first saw you I have felt more than ever, that a life of mere amusement can never have the value to one's self or others which ennobles a career of useful, benevolent exertion. Were I looking forward to continuing my wanderings, I would gladly cast my lot with yours, and become your fellow-labourer; or I would return to Brazil, and use my poor efforts to benefit Vigueiro's colony. As it is, rather than continue my present desultory mode of existence, I shall seek for some employment under government, which I am sure, through my uncle's influence, easily to obtain. I trust, when I am settled in my future home, you will visit me. I shall never cease to interest myself in your mission of love, and if I cannot assist you in it actively, I trust you will at

least allow me, from time to time, to contribute by such means as lie in my power to its success."

Mr. Grey was affected by the unusual earnestness of his lighthearted companion, and it was not without regret, as he thought how improbable it was that they would ever meet again, that he took the young student's proffered hand, and wished him good-bye, with a warm and fervent prayer for his future happiness.

Hermann proceeded to the post-inn, from which he was to start at an early hour the following morning by the diligence that would carry him the first stage towards Baden-Baden.

The town was dimly lighted by oil lamps suspended from cords or chains passing across the road from house to house. The streets were almost entirely deserted, and the stillness was only broken by the dull monotonous sound of the water flowing from the ever-open pipes of the fountains. Round the stone basin of one of these, a little group of women were assembled, talking loudly and eagerly as they filled their kettles and pitchers. Hermann

could distinguish little but the words, "Fatherland" and "foreign parts" uttered now in angry, now in mournful tones. Presently one of them broke out into bitter invective against some one apparently not present.

"Let him go, if he will; I'll not go with him! Why,—why should he want us to leave our home, our little farm, and all——"

Hermann passed on. He had heard enough to explain to him the cause of the poor woman's passionate grief.

"Ah!" thought he, as he entered the inn, "shrewd as that fellow is, he does not understand that his business is, *not* to unsettle those who are contented with their lot, but to point out to those who are discontented a mode of perhaps bettering their position."

CHAPTER XI.

GRETA A CLASS-TEACHER.

After Mr. Grey's departure from the farm, there ensued a lull in Greta's life, such as occurs from time to time in the lives of all. The painful incident of her father's apprehension, and the pleasing one of Mr. Grey's transient visit, had broken the chain of daily events; but those events had now resumed their course, and the continual round of the mill-wheel was hardly more monotonous than the continual round of Greta's duties.

And yet, though she still leaned against the tall tree, knitting and watching the cows, her thoughts had wider, more intelligent and amusing range. Every occurrence in which we take part becomes a page in the story of our lives; and it greatly depends on ourselves whether we can recur to it with

pleasure, or only with pain. Greta had not the sorrow of reflecting that her father had been the victim of her imprudence, or had been saved by her deliberate untruth; and, while quite ignorant how he might have acted on his declared intention of leaving the country for ever, she concluded he had done so, and somehow took it into her head that he had very likely gone to Canada. So, as she knitted and watched the cows, she fell into many a dreamy reverie, (not a very good habit, but one which her way of life certainly fostered,) and pictured him the actor or spectator of many things—now on sea, now on shore—and at length finished off her fancy's sketch by settling him as a backwoodsman, in a neat little log-hut.

At other times she followed in imagination Mr. Grey on his missionary progress, which led through an infinite variety of incident. This reminded her, that such a practical man as the Englishman would certainly not be pleased at the desultory employment she was affording to her thoughts, and that he would be much better satisfied, and with reason, if,

while keeping one eye, as Herr Zilling had expressed it, on the cows, and her fingers at work, she devoted her remaining powers of usefulness to getting forward the little peasant children with the chapters which they were to learn against Mr. Grey's return.

The first time, therefore, that she met one or two of them, she said,—

"Time is wearing on, and, I fear, if you do not make progress, you will lose your Testaments. Come to me, then, when I watch the cows, and I will hear you repeat a certain number of new verses, and all your old ones, every day."

This plan answered so well with one or two promising children, that they, elated by their proficiency, and delighted with Greta's kindness, soon communicated the news of what was going on to the rest; and, in a short time, she had quite a large class under the tall tree, without in any way neglecting the cows.

The days were now drawing visibly shorter, and many a token denoted the advance of autumn.

The weather became very changeable, accompanied by sudden and rapid variations of temperature. One day, every tree, bush, and blade of grass would be stiff with a frosty incrustation, and the cold so severe that the children were glad to run in from their play to chafe their little hands upon the shining brown tiles of the old stove in the guest-room; the next all these wintry appearances had vanished, and there was a genial warmth in the air that might have deceived a stranger to the climate into the belief that summer had returned.

It was on one of these fine, warm afternoons that Herr Zilling suddenly remembered his promise to Greta to exchange the book he had lent her for another; and, as a considerable time had meanwhile elapsed, he took a little shame to himself, and resolved to walk over at once to the Mill in the Valley. He put a suitable book in his pocket, and then started off, taking the same short cut to the mill, which, on a former occasion, had brought him where Greta was watching the cows. A thick underwood concealed him from view till

he was close on the spot; and, before he emerged from it, he heard the sound of several small, treble voices, apparently repeating something in chorus. He paused to listen; and, to his surprise, distinguished Greta's voice amongst the rest, helping when the little ones were at fault.

She blushed as he suddenly emerged from his hiding-place, and, wishing her good-day, smilingly asked, "If she had usurped the schoolmaster's office?" She explained how her class had originated; and he commended both the action and the motive, adding, that he was glad to find her so pleasantly and usefully employed.

After catechising the children a little, and giving them a word of encouragement, he took leave of the happy little group, telling Greta that he was on his way to her uncle's, where she would probably find him on her return.

On arriving at the house, he found the guest-room deserted by all but little Rickele, who was sitting on a bench by the window, with a large, well-worn Bible resting on her knees, and a half-

knitted stocking suspended from one hand, whilst with the other she counted how often she had diminished in the leg; having ascertained this, she cast a glance at the huge ball of grey worsted at her side, and with renewed diligence nimbly plied the bright steel needles, whilst she slowly repeated the words: "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

On seeing Herr Zilling, she rose, and laid her book on the table, but continued knitting.

"You seem very busy, Rickele," said he. "What is there in the middle of that ball of worsted that makes you so anxious to knit to the end?"

"I am knitting Karl some winter stockings," said she, shyly working the half-knitted needle backwards and forwards, at the risk of dropping the stitches, "and mother has wound the worsted round something that's for me when I knit up to it; I don't know what it is, but I *think* 'tis a four-and-twenty kreutzer piece, to buy some new ribbons to tie my hair-plaits with on Sundays. My old

ones are very shabby, and I want to make haste and finish the ball, that I may get some new ones."

"Not the outward adorning of the hair, but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price," murmured the young curate, as if to himself. "As I entered," continued he, louder, "I heard you repeating some verses of the first Epistle of John. I suppose you are learning for Mr. Grey; but do you understand what you learn? Who *is* your brother? Can you think of a parable that tells you this?"

Rickele reflected for a moment, and then mentioned the parable of the good Samaritan.

"Yes," said the curate, "the words 'neighbour' and 'brother' are used in the same general sense; we are all neighbours and brethren in Christ, and, as such, should treat one another with kindness and brotherly love. 'He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.' But, tell me, where are the little boys and your father? I can guess where your mother is, by these piles of smoking black bread."

"Yes, sir, she is in the bakehouse, and left me here to attend to any one who might come in, or I should have gone with the other children to the forest, to repeat my chapters to Greta. Karl and Oswald are in the orchard with father, helping to gather in the apples for cellaring."

At this moment the miller entered, and having respectfully greeted Herr Zilling, he threw the little girl a rosy-cheeked apple, to reward her for staying within doors, and then said :—

"Bring us some glasses, Rickele, and a bottle of wine. Have you heard, sir," continued he, turning to the curate, as he drew from his pocket a capacious tobacco-pouch, and prepared to fill his pipe, "that you are going to lose one of your parishioners?"

"Whom, and in what way?" asked the curate.

"Why, sir, Toni Schäfer was at the fair last week, and fell in with an agent beating up recruits for a new German colony in Brazil, and the fellow seems to have been so eloquent in praise of emigration in general, and that country in particular, that young Schäfer's head is quite turned, and nothing

will do but he must go out;—he will listen to no dissuasion or remonstrance, and the old people are quite cut up about it. They say they shall sell the farm by auction, and go and spend the short remainder of their days in the village."

"Poor old people! I must see if I cannot console them a little," said Herr Zilling. "It is a pity Toni should be going to leave his aged parents, and so good a farm too, capable of so much improvement; but I certainly cannot wonder at his being taken with the agent's description of Brazil and Vigueiro's colony. I lately received such a glowing account from an old fellow-student, who has been travelling in that country, and has visited Vigueiro's colony, that I almost feel as though I should like to emigrate thither myself."

"Well, sir, I don't much approve of emigration, for my part, and cannot understand why Toni wishes to leave his home. My wife, indeed, puts her own construction on this sudden whim of his, and says" (lowering his voice, and inclining towards the curate) "'tis Greta's fault; but that's so like the

women, eh, sir? always some reason of their own to give for a man's movements."

Herr Zilling made no answer to this speech, but began to talk of Brazil, repeating what Hermann had told him in favour of Vigueiro's colony.

"'Tis true," continued he, "that as regards art and invention, the Brazilians are in many respects far behind us: what would you say, for example, to a flour-mill formed of a stick of timber and a box?"

The miller opened his eyes.

"It is a fact," continued Herr Zilling, smiling at his host's incredulous look, "that in some parts of the country the people make such answer their purpose. My friend told me that in descending from Tigres, his attention was several times attracted by heavy, thumping sounds, repeated at intervals of one or two minutes. On examination, he ascertained that these sounds were caused by the operation of a mill of very singular construction. The whole machine consisted of a stick of timber ten feet long, so balanced that six feet of one extremity

reached to a quantity of corn in a cavity, whilst to the other end a box was attached, constructed and placed so as to receive a small stream of water from a brook running down the ravine. When the box is nearly filled with water, the equilibrium passes to the shorter extremity of the timber, and the long end is thrown up in the air; as the short end goes down, the water is cast out, and the long end falls back upon the corn. By this process the timber is kept in regular motion, and the corn is pounded into meal."

Just as the good miller was drawing a somewhat contemptuous comparison between the machine thus described and his own well-arranged water-mill, Greta entered, and prepared to set the supper-table.

"Have you milked the cows, lass?" asked her uncle, abruptly interrupting himself.

"Yes, uncle."

"Is all right in the stable? How is Cherry-red's lameness?"

"The swelling at the knee seems to have in-

creased since the morning; she limped terribly coming home, poor thing!"

"Dear, dear, why did not you tell me of it immediately?" said the farmer, getting up and moving towards the door; "I must go and see to her myself: such a good milker as she is too! I cannot afford to trifle with her. Excuse me, Herr Curate, I shall be back directly; you'll stay and partake of our homely meal with us."

The curate said he would not detain him, but that he had a few words to say to Greta; and when the old man was gone he took from his pocket a neat little volume, and placed it in her hands: it was the life of Bogatzky, lately published by the old pastor of Mönchthal, who, now that he could no longer actively minister to his flock, chiefly employed his declining powers in literary labours for their benefit.

"I have just finished reading this little work myself," said he, "and have been much pleased with it; you will find the instances of resignation, faith, and piety, here recorded, edify and strengthen

you. I suppose you have long since finished 'The Pearl of Days;' and I should not have waited until now to change it for you had not my time been so fully taken up in visiting sick parishioners. The rapid and sudden changes of weather that we have lately experienced are very trying to weak constitutions; even I have felt them; indeed, our variable climate, with its searching winds and chill evening air, never suits me; and were it not that the age and increasing debility of our good pastor would render it painful to him to have to seek another substitute, I should almost feel inclined to resign my post, and remove to some more genial climate. It is not as though I felt I were doing real, evident good here; *then* I should say, I will not neglect my duty for the sake of myself, I will remain here: but the hearts of all seem so cold, so dull, so void of that spiritual life I would fain inspire them with!"

Greta thought she would like to tell him how he had kindled a spark of light and life in the lame clock-casemaker's heart—how he had given her comfort and support in the most trying hour of her

existence—how Dame Vöhrenbach and her family revered him; but she dared not venture so much; and, reverting to the subject of the climate, reminded him, instead of the warm summer days that were but just passed, of the deep blue sky and the green shady forests he had then admired.

"True," said he, "but I was thinking of a country where the summer reigns nearly all the year round; where the sky is of a deeper blue even than that which overspreads our native forests; and where the woods are not peopled with the stately, sombre fir, but with flowering trees, whose branches are draped with luxuriant creepers, dyed with every colour of the rainbow; but I must be going," said he, stopping short; "and I had almost forgotten my chief errand to you. Poor Elise Vöhrenbach is in great trouble on account of her idiot-sister, whom she believes to be dying; and her affections are so much centred on the child, that she declares she could not live without her. I have spoken to her of resignation to the Lord's will, of trust in the merciful dealings of His Providence; but my words

of comfort seem to produce little effect. She says, 'Yes, sir—yes;' and when that is *all*, it is rather discouraging. A visit from you might do her good—you are a favourite in the house, I know; and, for many reasons, will endeavour to console her."

"I am afraid I cannot do much," said Greta, thoughtfully, "but I will certainly do my best. I generally see her on market-day, and I know it is a hard trial to her to think of parting with Mimi; because, as she has often said, the child is, like all of us, full of evil passions, and she knows not of a crucified Redeemer, through faith in whom she may be saved. But who can tell, sir, what passes in the depths of the idiot's heart?"

"True, that which is a dark void to us, may be a bright and beautiful casket in the eye of the Lord," said the curate. "Good-bye, Greta; if any one can comfort her, you will, I am convinced."

CHAPTER XII.

AFFAIRS TAKE A TURN.

" Well speeds, amid this selfish world,
That heart, where'er it goes,
That warmly beats for others' joys,
And bleeds for others' woes."

Mimi was in a deep decline, and the doctor averred that the inclement weather that had set in since the first of November must inevitably hasten her end.

It fell to Greta's task to break this sad news to the poor mother and Elise; and she was with them as much as her home-duties permitted. Elise, who looked on herself as the cause of her sister's imbecility, could not bear the prospect of her death; and the good dame, though more resigned than her daughter, deeply grieved over the impending calamity: for the Almighty has mercifully decreed that an

unusual portion of love for the idiot and *crétin* should instinctively fill the hearts of those nearly allied to them, as a counterpoise to the repugnance felt towards them by the world at large.

As Mimi's bodily strength declined, her mental powers seemed partially to return. She had become accustomed to Greta since her frequent visits, and appeared no longer to regard her with dislike, as a stranger, but suffered her willingly to watch by her and talk to her; and often, when Greta knelt by the bedside to pray, would the child cease the nervous workings of her arms, and, calmly contemplating the kneeling figure beside her, remain as in a listening posture till the voice ceased. It was impossible to discover whether she had any conception of the meaning of the words, but the mere idea of such a possibility was comforting to Elise.

On the Sunday following the day on which the doctor had pronounced his final opinion respecting Mimi's state, Greta quitted the cottage at a late hour in the afternoon, with a slow step and a

countenance betraying traces of recent tears. All was over! She had remained with the mourning family till the first burst of grief was stilled, and then, placing a little Bible (one of those given her by Mr. Grey) in Elise's hands, and bidding her seek consolation there, she quietly left the house.

It was a cold dull afternoon, and heavy grey and white clouds hung about the horizon, gradually rising higher and higher, till at length the whole surface of the heavens was overcast. Greta slowly pursued her way, so much in thought that she did not perceive these symptoms of an approaching snow-storm until roused by the cold contact of a large flake that rested for a moment on her cheek, and then ran off in the form of a tear-drop. She hastened her steps, and reached home but just in time to avoid being overtaken by a very heavy fall.

In the guest-room she found Mr. Grey, who had arrived at the farm half an hour before her, and was now comfortably seated beside the old stove, enjoying his cigar and a cup of hot coffee, whilst

he listened to the noisy crackling of the fir-logs.

Greta's face lighted up at the sight of his good-humoured countenance, and when seated with the rest of the family at supper, listening to the story of his adventures and successes since last he saw them, she forgot the painful scene she had that day witnessed.

When she rose the next morning, all traces of the snow had disappeared, and as soon as the sun had dispelled the mists, she set out to make known Mr. Grey's return to all within her reach, and to summon the young candidates for Testaments to assemble at the farm that afternoon.

Mr. Grey was astonished at the number of children who presented themselves, and still more surprised to find how well the greater part of them had accomplished their task. To some he was very lenient, it is true, being unwilling to lose any opportunity of spreading the Word of God. However, he found himself forced to make an example of two great boys, who, after having, as they said,

for the fun of the thing, undertaken to learn the Epistle, had speedily given up the attempt, refusing either to listen to Greta's admonitions, or to accept of her assistance, and yet had had the boldness to present themselves with the rest in the expectation of receiving a Testament. After a few words of reproof for their improper conduct, Mr. Grey told them that they should keep the little books containing the Epistle, and that he would leave a couple of Testaments with the pastor of Mönchthal, to be given to them should they have accomplished their task by Christmas.

Then, turning to little Rickele, he presented her with a handsome Bible, bound in morocco and gilt, "As a reward," he said, "for having learned within a given time, not only the first, but also the second and third Epistles of St. John, and repeated them without missing or transposing a single word."

Owing to the fitful state of the weather, Mr. Grey considered it better to postpone his further journey for the present, and therefore begged per-

mission of his hosts to remain for a few days longer under their hospitable roof. This was soon noised abroad through the valley, and came to Herr Zilling's ears, who immediately walked down to the Mill to ascertain the truth of the report.

"Do you know," said he to the Englishman, as soon as the first greetings were over, "your stay here for a few days would be of service to me just now. I have been in much perplexity, for my uncle has written for me to go home, and I know of no one to take my place here in my absence. The clergyman of the next village has kindly promised to hold one service at Mönchthal on Sunday, but that is all he can do, and it is a great deal, considering he has a large parish of his own, and lives nine miles from hence. But there are one or two sick and infirm people whom I should be very glad if you would look in on, if you can do so without much personal inconvenience, during the week; I shall only be absent a few days."

Mr. Grey readily undertook the office of Scripture reader during his stay at the Mill, which would

not be for more than three or four days; and he made a memorandum of the names of the persons he was wished to visit.

"Nothing the matter at home, sir, I hope?" asked the miller, full of satisfaction at the thought of keeping Mr. Grey a few days longer;—"no illness?"

"Oh no," said the curate, "my uncle and aunt are about to celebrate their silver-wedding, and as they have almost supplied the place of parents to me, and are now advanced in years, they do not wish me to be the only one wanting to complete the family group which is to assemble from far and near to celebrate the festival."

"Well," said Mr. Grey, "I wish you joy beforehand of the happy occasion, and hope it may go off well. In England, silver-weddings are not celebrated, though I *did* once hear of a happy couple imitating the German custom, and marking their twenty-fifth wedding-day by some especial demonstration."

"Many thanks for your good wishes, and the

kindness with which you have promised to help me," said the curate, as he shook Mr. Grey warmly by the hand; and bidding the miller farewell, he hastened away to make arrangements for starting on his journey early the following morning.

His relations resided at Steinach, a very large village in the Duchy of Meiningen, containing 2,200 inhabitants. His uncle was one of the chief wholesale iron manufacturers of the place, and, his goods not being of the wretched description too commonly made in Germany, and subsequently passed off for English,* to the great detriment of our trade and reputation, he took pride, nay, made it a point of honour to stamp them with his name.

"It is too bad," he would say, "that the Sheffield market, though so formidable a rival, should be injured by having the names and marks of its good houses affixed to our wares. So shameless has the piracy become, that it now appears to be quite usual for the question to be unblushingly asked,

* See "Times," Aug. 2, 1858. "State of Trade."

'What mark will you have?' But I wash my hands of such proceedings. Either I will make a fortune honestly, or not at all."

Unfortunately, the integrity of this worthy man, and of others like him, has not been sufficient to repair the injury done to our markets by the unprincipled. The superior German goods, which are stamped, are contrasted by them with the spurious goods they pass off for English, whereby the English reputation is damaged and the German exalted. It is to no avail, we are told, that the Sheffield manufacturers have adopted the plan of inclosing in the parcels of their goods a printed caution against spurious goods with false marks. Even *this* has been copied by the pirates, who have added to their roguery the cry of "Stop thief!"

Herr Zilling performed his journey to within a very short distance of his native place without meeting with accident or adventure of any kind. There were but few travellers on the road at that inclement season, and he not unfrequently had the diligence all to himself.

However, on returning to the coach, after partaking of refreshments at a small town some thirty miles from Steinach, where they had stopped to change horses, he found that two other passengers, a well-dressed man and his wife, had already taken their seats in it. Giving a sort of half bow, as a recognition of their presence, he dropped into his place, and with true foreign freedom commenced a conversation.

"It is a very cold day for travelling, sir; and I have come the last twenty miles in an empty coach too, which made it seem colder still."

"Perhaps you come from the valleys?" said the lady.

"No—yes—that is, the valley I come from lies many feet above the level of the sea; I am from the Black Forest."

"Ah, I know that part very well," said the gentleman, "I was born and brought up in the Black Forest."

"Indeed! do you know the town of Dornfeld, or the village of Mönchthal?"

"No, we lived in another part of the forest; but I had a niece at school in that neighbourhood, at a place called Rosenheim, not more than twenty or thirty miles from Dornfeld, I think; but I do not know whether she is at school still, or, indeed, where she is, for the connections in whose care she lives have removed from the farm they had when I last heard of them."

"There is a young girl amongst my parishioners who was once at school at Rosenheim," said the curate, "and is now living with an uncle and aunt close to Mönchthal; *her* name is Weiler—Margaretha Weiler."

"Why, that is my niece, then!" said the gentleman, interrupting him; "you must tell us all about her, her appearance and disposition, and what appear to be her prospects. Being the clergyman of the place, I dare say you know something of her."

The curate's description of Greta's disposition and personal appearance was apparently highly gratifying to his interrogator; not so his hints

respecting her present condition and probable future.

"Poor girl! poor girl!" echoed he from time to time, looking over to his wife.

"Yes, my dear," said she, answering his thoughts, "if we only had not so many children of our own."

"True, true. Well," continued he, as the coach stopped at Steinach, and Herr Zilling prepared to get out, "say many kind things to Margaretha for us—for her uncle and aunt Friedrich—that is, whenever you see her again, and tell her, I hope she may one day be able to pay us a visit at Gronenburg."

Herr Zilling arrived at his uncle's house on the eve of the festival, just in time to take part in the social rejoicings of the family. The next day was spent by his uncle and aunt in receiving the congratulations of a numerous circle of friends and acquaintance, and in giving in return a banquet to all whom they knew; so that the young man saw little of his relatives that day, and the next he

was forced to leave them, feeling as home-sick as a schoolboy after the holidays are over.

He thought how pleasant it would be to have a curacy nearer to them, or to have a home of his own somewhere;—in fact, he thought anything would be better than living as he was now doing, isolated from his relations, far from all his friends, and in a neighbourhood where there was no one of cultivated mind whom he cared even to call his acquaintance.

He was still rather gloomily brooding over these topics, when the coach that had brought him the last stage of his journey stopped at Dornfeld. He got down, and taking his little carpet-bag in his hand, set out to walk to the village.

He had not gone far when he came up with a dusty pedestrian of business-like aspect. It was Vigueiro's agent, who speedily found an excuse for entering into conversation with him; and, seeing he was a minister, took the opportunity of inquiring whether he knew of any young clergyman who might be willing to go out to Brazil, and undertake the cure of the new colony.

"Such an one would not receive any great return for his labours, 'tis true," continued the agent; "but he would have the consciousness of doing good, and would be sent out free of expense."

"Exactly so," said Zilling, absently.

Curiously enough, he was thinking he might be the very man himself, though he had just been sighing for a curacy nearer home than his own. "I will remember what you have told me," said he; "at any rate, if you will give me your address, you shall hear from me again."

The agent, who was a shrewd man, thought he could perceive something more than the words expressed, and, following up his advantage, he began boldly to puff off the colony, and the virtues of its founder.

"A married man would be preferable to a single one for such a post," said he in conclusion, "if provided with an active helpmate, and not encumbered with many children."

"I understand," said the curate; "I will see about it—farewell! this is my road to Mönchthal."

Serious news awaited Herr Zilling at the village. It was dusk when he reached his lodgings on the outskirts of the place, where, through the half-open door, he perceived Mother Batt busy frying egg-cakes at the stove in the little kitchen, opposite the entrance.

"Sir, sir!" cried she, immediately desisting from her employment, and hastening to meet him, "can it be that you met none of the villagers a-coming along, and have not heard what has happened?"

"Not a soul! not a word!" replied he hastily; "what is it?"

"Well, sir, to think *you* should not know it yet! Our good old pastor, dear man, died the very day you left us! carried off in a moment, poor, dear man, by a stroke of apoplexy: and a new minister is already appointed to take his place, sir, a youngish man, who intends to take all the duty himself, they say—"

"When and how did you hear that, mother?" said Herr Zilling, in much emotion, and somewhat disposed to question her authority for this latter

piece of news. Finding it, however, on inquiry, to be likely to be correct, he fell into a deep fit of musing, out of which the good old woman in vain endeavoured to rouse him, by repeating all the expressions of regret uttered by the villagers at the prospect of losing him, assuring him, at the same time, that she "should never care so much for any one else."

At length she left him to his supper, for which he had very little appetite. He remained nearly an hour with his chin resting on his hand, in profound and painful thought. Then he went out, and called on a neighbour, whom he found just preparing for bed, but who confirmed the news, and finally he returned to pass a wakeful night.

Herr Zilling had much to see about the next day; but yet he found time, in the afternoon, to go over to the Mill in the Valley, and revolved many troubled thoughts in his head by the way.

On arriving at the miller's, he found it was washing-day, and Greta, in wooden-soled shoes, with her skirts turned up, and a coarse holland apron

pinned round her, was perpetually passing up and down from the laundry to the drying-loft, with great baskets of linen in her arms, so that there was no opportunity of speaking to her, and delivering her uncle's message. Mr. Grey had left the place, and the old man was busy at the mill. There was no one to talk to but the two little boys, and Herr Zilling was too much pre-occupied with his own affairs to think of playing with them just then, so he took out a cigar, and, seating himself opposite the window, watched Greta ascending and descending the steps leading to the outside gallery, with her basket.

As he observed how active she was, and how handy she seemed about all she did, and reflected what a pleasing girl she was, how modest, how intelligent, and of what respectable birth, the thought (which might already have been dwelling in his mind) struck him forcibly that she would be the very wife for him.

At length he was able to speak to her, and deliver his message. She listened to it with tears in her

eyes; and whilst she was full of emotion, he hastily took her hand and said, "Greta, do you think you would go with me to Brazil?"—

"Sir—?" said Greta, blushing scarlet.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

Some hours later, the young curate quitted the house. The miller walked with him to the little wicket-gate, and returned rubbing his hands in high glee, as he thought with pride of the dower he should give his niece.

"There's Cherry-red, her chief favourite among all the herd, but she has injured herself, poor beast; then there are Snowdrop and Cowslip, both fine creatures. What do you say, Frau, shall we give her the two spotted cows with her, and—?"

But the Frau was gone; she had not time to listen to him then—she was thinking what she should provide for supper in honour of the grand event; besides, she too was busy revolving in her mind what number of articles from her well-stored linen-

chest would be a sufficiently handsome portion for the bride of such a son-in-law. She was calculating how many of her red-checked and red-bordered cloths, sheets, and pillow-cases, how many dozen of her good knitted stockings she would have to give up.

"Ah!" said the old miller to himself, shaking his head, "that emigrating to Brazil is the only bad part of the business. Why can't they stay in their own country and be happy? If our good old pastor's son-in-law be coming, as they say, to take the cure of Mönchthal, they can't remain here, to be sure; but there are plenty of curacies to be had all over the land—no, no, I don't like the going out to Brazil."

Greta had herself some misgivings at the thought of becoming an exile from her country and her friends, but they were but transient, and she went up to her little garret-room that night with a light heart and feelings widely differing from those she had experienced on that very evening three months ago, when, after a day of misfortunes at the village

and market-town, she had gone to bed, with her aunt's harsh words ringing in her ears, too sorrowful and desponding to give heed even to little Rickele's loving attempts at consolation. *Then* she had prayed, "Oh, Jesus, be my only stay:" now the prayer was turned into a thanksgiving for His having supported her through so many trials, and given her so much happiness.

When Herr Zilling came down to the mill the next morning, he had a newly-written, unsealed letter in his hand.

"This is to your uncle," said he, giving it to Greta; "you may read what I have written, and add a few words yourself. Herr Werth has some right in the disposal of your hand, and it may be that, with the consent of your connexions, he will wish to bestow it himself. I have written to my friend Hermann, to beg him to meet me at Steinach, where I have affairs to settle that will detain me some weeks; and should you go to stay with your maternal uncle, we should be so near each other that I could often see you. When my business is

arranged, I shall take leave of my friends at home, and could then join you at Thalheim, whence we might easily proceed to the coast."

This was what Greta had secretly wished in her own mind; she knew her aunt's clinging to all that was peasant-like, and gladly seized upon the idea of escaping the ordeal of a wedding conducted according to what she would have considered the orthodox style. There would be the stopping of the *Brautwagen*, the conducting of the flower-crowned bride with music and song through the village, the bridal dance, the uproarious wedding dinner, concluding with the loving cup. All this Greta knew she would have to go through, if her aunt had her way; but the curate foresaw it, and arranged it otherwise.

The first thing he did was to stipulate for Greta's being allowed to quit her peasant's garb, and although it went very much against the grain, the Frau was forced at length to give in. Greta was rejoiced to reassume her old dress, which seemed to her the earnest of a change in her way of life,

although in a momentary indulgence of vanity, she *did* acknowledge to herself, that she did not look so pretty in it as in the picturesque costume.

But this thought never crossed the young curate's mind; in his daily visits to the mill he learned more and more to appreciate the beauty of the young girl's character—her faith, her resignation, her patient endurance of daily little trials. He frequently led her to talk to him of bygone years, of her mother, her school-days, her life with the lost aunt she had so deeply mourned. One subject only seemed to be mutually, though tacitly, banished from their conversations: that was—her father. Herr Zilling judged wisely that he knew enough to make it dangerous to know more. And although he saw and understood well that it would have been a relief to Greta to talk of him, he dared not encourage her to disburthen her mind. It did occur to him once that Weiler might have met with Vigueiro's agent, who was in the neighbourhood at the time of his appearance there, and that he might have consented to go out to the colony, but he

banished the idea as childish; "for," thought he, "how many chances there are against it—colonies and places of emigration are so numerous all over the world!"

When the weather was bright and frosty, and the ground hard and dry, they would cross together the frozen mill-stream, and wander up the forest-path, so often trodden by Greta with the herd; and then the curate would talk to her of Brazil, and, playfully fanning from her brow the shade that passed over it at the name, so skilfully and brightly describe the enjoyment of a few years spent there, ending with a promise of one day returning to Europe, that the cloud was soon dispelled, and her fears turned into pleasing anticipations of the event.

But the time at length came that must put an end to these peaceful interviews at the mill. Herr Zilling's successor arrived at Mönchthal, and the curate must vacate his place. A letter had come, too, from Greta's uncle and aunt at Thalheim, full of affectionate congratulations and good wishes,

concluding with a pressing invitation for Greta to spend the few weeks preceding her marriage with them, and a wish that the wedding might take place at Thalheim.

Now all was bustle and preparation for the departure. Greta went her round through the valley and village to take leave: it was a painful day to her, for she had been generally beloved, but the pain was mingled with pleasure. Her last visit was to the Vöhrenbach family. The old man and Hans had come home that afternoon from their hut in the forest, where they had left a boy to mind the kiln till their return, on purpose to be there to see her for the last time. As Hans held out his hand to say good-bye, a tear trickled down his bluff face, and he could hardly get out the words.

"May you always," said the old man with emotion, "find as good a friend as you have been to us!"

"Aye, that she surely will," added the dame, "if she still remembers the hymn that first led me to notice her; and though she is now going to be and

live like a lady, I shall always love to think of her as she was when I saw her that day minding the cows in the forest clearing."

Elise was not there. She was gone to the little churchyard on the side of the hill to sweep the snow from Mimi's grave. Thither Greta followed her, and there, with the eloquence of a sympathizing heart, she poured words of strength and consolation into the young mourner's heart.

At length she rose, and said, "Now farewell, dear Elise—and yet I will not say farewell; for when Hans gets married, and you are no longer wanted at home, you must come and live with me and help me."

Poor little Rickele was inconsolable when the parting moment arrived. "Who will teach me hymns and texts now?" said she, sobbing, as she clung fast to her; "and who will teach Karl and Oswald? Oh! Greta, don't go!"

"You must supply my place to Karl and Oswald," replied Greta, fondly kissing her, "and, in doing them good, you will receive good yourself. Good-

bye, dearest Rickele, I hear the sleigh bells tinkling. My uncle and aunt will be waiting for me. Run and tell Rosina the Brautwagen is going. If she stops it, aunt says I am to give her *this*." And she held up a bright new gulden.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE LAST TRIAL.

No one approved of the emigration scheme; neither Herr Zilling's adopted parents, nor Greta's relations. All advised him against it, and yet none could advise him what to do if he abandoned it.

In the midst of this perplexity a letter came from Hermann, to say that the living of his native place had just fallen vacant, and that as it was in his uncle's gift, it only depended on his friend's choice whether he would accept it or not. This news was hailed with delight by all but the young Curate himself. He considered himself called to become a missionary, and regarded Hermann's offer in the light of a temptation, which it was his

duty firmly to resist; and he prayed for strength to do so.

Greta repeatedly assured him that she would follow him willingly whichever course he might think it best to pursue; but he could not blind himself to her secret feelings on the subject.

Still remaining undecided how to act, it at length occurred to him, "Am I not rather following the bent of my own selfish inclinations, than seeking to obey a call from God?"

As the thought developed itself, it took deeper possession of his mind; he convinced himself that it was in reality the case, and now all was easy; his way was clear before him. No one was more pleased than Greta at the change that soon manifested itself in him; and when he at length declared he had fully abandoned the emigration scheme, she told him frankly how painful the thought had become to her of late, especially since she had been restored to her kind and loving relations. This was the finishing stroke, it sealed

his determination, and made the sacrifice sweet to him.

There was nothing now to hinder the marriage from immediately taking place. "The sooner the better," Hermann wrote; for the parishioners had been for some weeks past as sheep without a shepherd, and were impatient for the arrival of their new minister.

The wedding-day was fixed, and all prepared; but Greta was to go through one more trial before passing the boundary, on the other side of which a new and happier life lay before her.

One afternoon, towards dusk, as she slowly paced up and down the well-trodden path leading to her uncle Werth's little orchard, conversing with Herr Zilling, in low tones, the sound of some one approaching from behind, made her look round, and she recognised the Tyrolese pedlar, whom she had once before seen at the Mill in the Valley. He was making his way to the back-door, to offer his wares for sale, but the sight of Greta,

whom he instantly remembered, notwithstanding the change in her dress and general appearance, walking arm-in-arm with the Curate, so much surprised him that he stopped short in the middle of the path as if bewildered.

"Surely I have seen you before, Fräulein," he began, "at a farm near a little village in the Black Forest."

"Yes," said Greta, "you have. I lived with my uncle at the Mill in the Valley, where you came, one stormy night, to beg shelter, and—"

"Aye, and another time when I came, I saw the gentleman here, the Curate, if I don't mistake," said he, turning to Herr Zilling.

"I remember you well," returned the latter, "from the circumstance that you brought us the news of the Australian emigrant having been taken into custody on suspicion of being a runaway criminal. Did you ever hear what became of him afterwards?"

"Ah! the poor man who was falsely accused of

having murdered his wife eight years before! Poor fellow! Yes," said the Tyrolese, softening his rugged voice, and leaning on the top of his staff, with a look of deep concern, "I met him not far from the town, soon after the examination, and he said he was making his way to the coast, in order to return to Australia. But I told him a ship had just sailed, and there would not be another for some time, and so advised him—for I quite pitied the poor fellow, he had been so unjustly treated, and looked so very wretched—to return with me, if he had not friends on the coast, and take employment meanwhile as a field-labourer. There is always plenty to be had in the harvest and hay-making seasons; and some families from our village, who were going to sail the following month, would only be too glad, I knew, to see some one who could tell them a little about Australia, and perhaps go in the same vessel with them afterwards."

"And did he go?" asked the Curate, with

interest, whilst he tenderly pressed Greta's burning hand.

"I will tell you, sir, what happened; he went with me into the Tyrol, and obtained work in our village, where he soon came to be generally esteemed for his exemplary conduct; we were only sorry to think that he was so soon to leave us again. However, we lost him sooner than we expected; and in a way we had very little dreamed of. One hot noontide, after having finished his frugal repast—he always ate sparingly—he threw himself down in the long grass and fell asleep. His companions, returning to their labour, commenced operations without perceiving him, and at the first sweep, the point of a scythe entered his neck, and divided the jugular vein."

"Ah!" moaned Greta, pale as death.

"And—and—the event?" stammered Herr Zilling, guessing the truth, and supporting the sinking girl.

"It caused instant death, sir; he died without uttering a sound."

Greta turned away and wept, nay sobbed, for several minutes, but she gradually wept more silently; and her tears, though they streamed, were not wholly tears of bitterness.

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